The Loucheux Indians

Mackenzie Delta Research Project

The Amerindians of the Canadian North-West in the 19th Century, as seen by Émile Petitot

Volume II: The Loucheux Indians

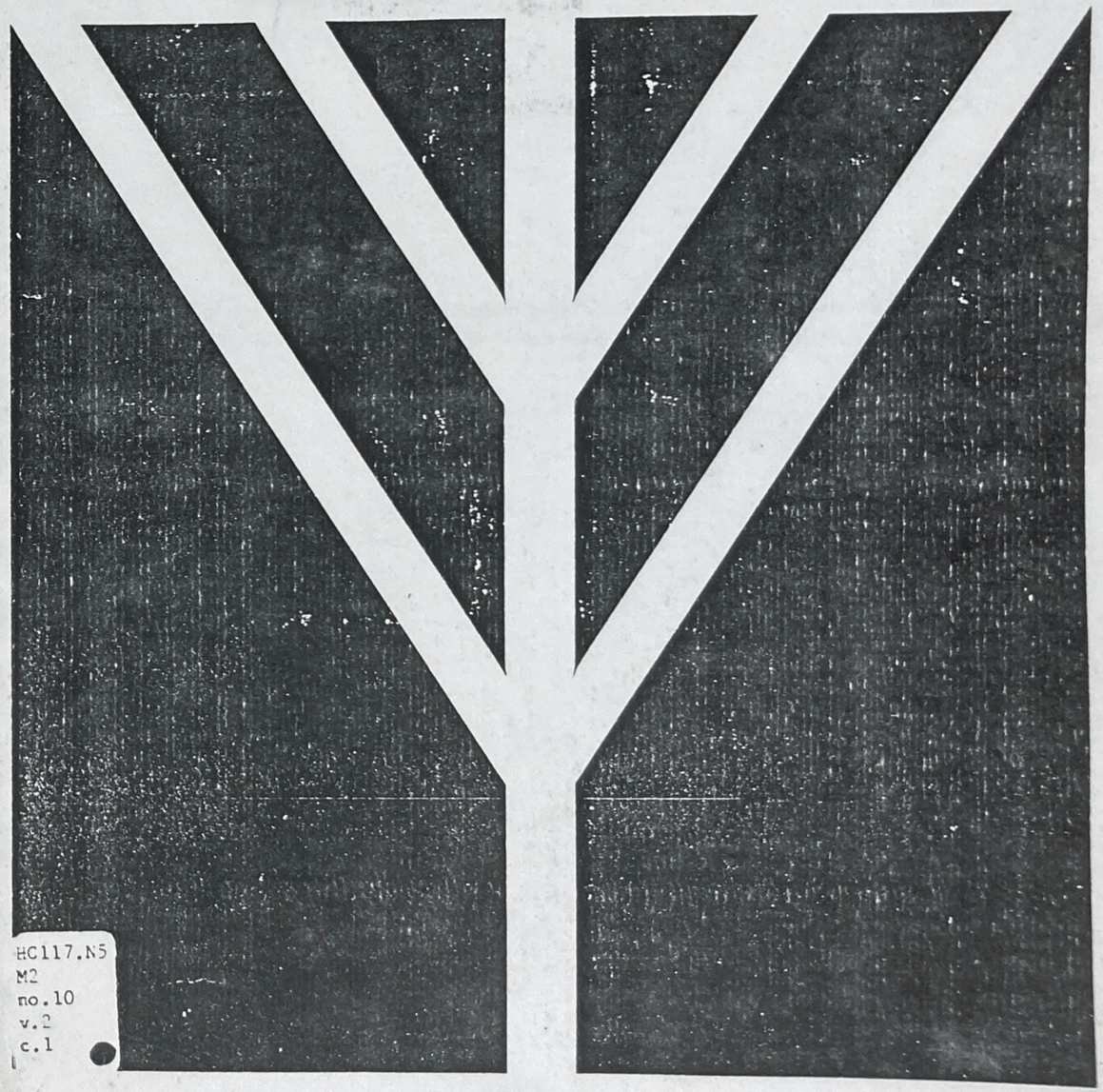
Preceded by general observations on the *Dènè-dindjié* Indians

edited by Donat Savoie

MDRP 10

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Ottawa

Northern Science Research Group



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THE AMERINDIANS OF THE CANADIAN NORTH-WEST IN THE 19th CENTURY, AS SEEN BY ÉMILE PETITOT.

Volume II: THE LOUCHEUX INDIANS

Preceded by general observations on
the *Dènè-dindjié* Indians

edited by Donat Savoie

Copies of this report may be obtained on application to the Chief, Northern Science Research Group, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Ottawa.

Published under the authority of
the Honorable Jean Chrétien,
P.C., M.P., L.L.L.
Minister of Indian Affairs and
Northern Development.

Northern Science
Research Group
Department of Indian Affairs
and Northern Development
Ottawa, June 1970.

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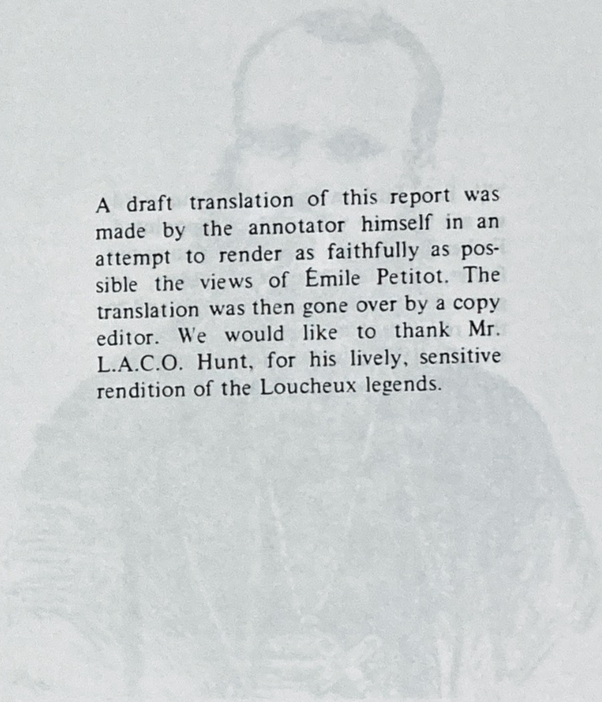
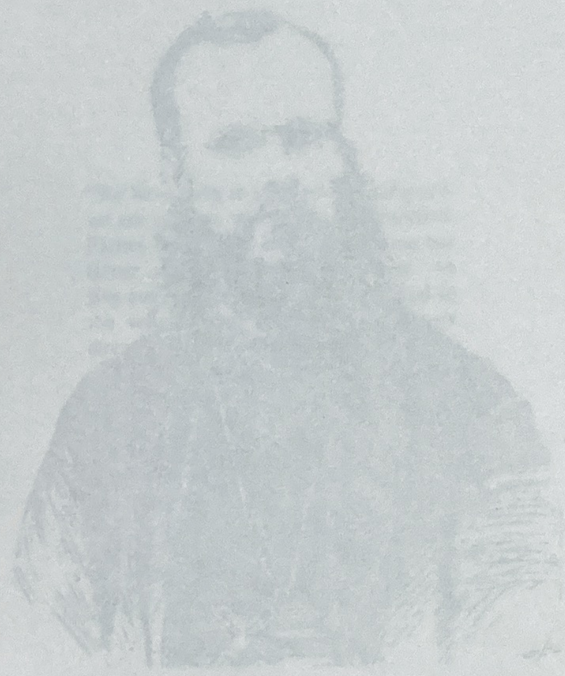
Cat. No. R32-2771/2F

A draft translation of this report was made by the annotator himself in an attempt to render as faithfully as possible the views of Émile Petitot. The translation was then gone over by a copy editor. We would like to thank Mr. L.A.C.O. Hunt, for his lively, sensitive rendition of the Loucheux legends.



"We have faith in you and in your word; we are sure we will not be disappointed. Father Petitot, we look upon you as our father, despite your youthfulness; we give ourselves unreservedly to you and to the religion that you preach. You are already a *Dènè-yaltpii* (dènè priest) by reputation; be also a *Dindjié pagenxi* (dindjié priest)."

1. Émile Petitot



PHONOLOGIC NOTES

"The *Dènè-dindjié* alphabet comprises eight vowels, two semi-vowels, twenty-one consonants and forty compound consonants: seventy-one letters altogether.

The eight vowels are: A, Œ, È, É, I, O, U and Ü.

A, É, È, I and O are pronounced as in Latin and French.

Œ is like the mute E in French. It is sounded EU as in the French words *œuf* and *heures;* ex.: *al'vœl'* (I am swinging) *yénishœn* (I am thinking).

U is always pronounced OO as in Italian. *Udi* (weakness), is pronounced *oodi.*

U is our French U. It is used only among the tribes of the Rocky Mountains.

The two semi-vowels are W and Y. W has the sound of OU, forming a diphthong with the following vowel or syllable and the preceding consonants; ex.: *fwa* (sand), pronounced *fwah*, in a single sound, as in the French *foi*; *wiya* (I have gone) is pronounced *we-yah* in two distinct sounds, the first as in the diphthong *oui*! (we).

Y has the same sound as in *yole*, *yack*, *yoryk*; it is never pronounced as in the French words *royaume*, or *ayant*. When preceded by U, it forms a diphthong and is pronounced *jia*.

The twenty-one simple consonants are: B, X, D, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, Ñ, P, R, ρ, S, S, T, Ţ, V and Z.

B is pronounced as in the French *baie;* ex.: *ban* (his-or her-mother). χ expresses a palatal blowing, it is the Greek sound of the letter "chi" or the J or guttural G of the Spanish, as in *baraja*, *bijo*; ex.: *χan* (mother).

D is pronounced as in the French words *dame*, and *dernier*; ex.: *oda* (opening).

F is pronounced as in the French word *faim*; ex.: *fa* (a long time).

G has always a hard sound, even in front of *e* or *i*, or in front of *a* or *o*. It is pronounced as in the French words *gamme*, *gangue* and *guerre*; ex.: *gu* (worm); *gè* (path), pronounced *gou*, *guè*; *égis* (convulsion), pronounced *éguis*.

H has the same aspirate sound as in the French words *hibou* and *héros*; ex.: *hè* (with), *kèni* (as). This particular letter is seldom used. I usually replace it with a circumflex accent on the vowel that must be aspirated. When the aspiration is very stong and causes a hiatus, it is expressed by open quotes; ex.: "*a* (snowshoe); "*el* (lock, lock-gate).

J is pronounced as in the French word *jour*; ex.:*éjial* (tanned).

K is like *c* in the French words *car*, and *comme*; ex.: *éku* (then), *kéni* (sap).

L is pronounced as in the French words *lent*, and *lire*; ex.: *la* (tip), *lié* (kitten).

M as in the French words *main* and *maman*; ex.: *mon* (his-or her-mother), *man* (bad).

N is pronounced as in the French words *nation* and *nez*; ex.: *niniya* (I arrived). It is always sounded whether it occurs in the middle or at the end of a word. If, however, there is a dot under it (ṇ), the n takes on a nasal sound as in the French words *bon*, *pain* or *main*, and forms a hiatus with the following vowel; ex.: *"an-ésya* (I got lost).

N is pronounced as the palatalized *gn* in the Spanish words *Señor*, *reñia*; it is a syncope; ex.: *ño* (he says) pronounced as a palatalized gno. It is used by the Loucheux, and sometimes, but rarely, by the Hareskins.

P is pronounced as in the French *pape*; ex.: *par* (mittens).

R has a smooth sound, as in French; ex.: *áré* (my friend).

ρ is the rolling guttural, R of the Arabs ex.: *ρan* (brain), *ρadè* (even); *ρéna* (he lives).

S is pronounced as in the French words *soleil* and *surseoir*; ex.: *sa* (sun); *sis* (unknown). Even within a word, it retains its sibilance and does not take the Z sound between two vowels; ex.: *yésa* (I am walking) pronounces *yéssa*, not yéza.

S has a sound which is intermediate between S and CH. In pronouncing S, let the tongue rest on the roof of the mouth. It is peculiar to the Loucheux and the Hareskin.

T is pronounced as in the French words *temps* and *tarir*; ex.: *tata* (illness); *éta* (cape); *étè* (horn).

Ṭ has a sound which is intermediate between *t* and *tch*. It sounds like TJ. Pronounce T with clenched teeth. This sound also is peculiar to the Loucheux and Hareskin Indians; ex.: *séta* (my eyes).

V is pronounced as in the French words *vin*, and *vase*; ex.: *vén* (around), *van* (evening). It is peculiar to the Loucheux and to the *Dénès* of the Mountains.

Z has the same sound as in the French *zèbre*; ex.: *éza* (footfall); *ézi* (body).

The forty double consonants are divided into six reduplicated or clicking consonants. and thirty-four compound consonants.

KK is expressed by a guttural clicking; ex.: *KKin* (knoll).

LL has two sounds. In the Loucheux idiom it is palatalized and is pronounced as in the Spanish *llano*; ex.: *llen* (much). In Hare talk and in Montagnais, it is sounded as in the English *well*; ex.: *bélla* (its extremity).

MM, NN and SS present no difficulty.

TT is pronounced by pressing the tongue against the palate then releasing it abruptly while pronouncing T; ex.: *tta* (feather); *ttôρ* (nest); *ttuz* (bark).

CH is pronounced as in the French words *chant* and *chuchoter*; ex.: *chié* (mountain); *chén* (song).

TCH is pronounced as in the English *cheque*; ex.: *tcha* (big); *tchizé* (lynx).

TTCH is equivalent to TT plus CH; ex.: *ottcha* (contrarily).

DJ and DDJ are both very easy to pronounce; ex.: *djô* (big); *éddjich* (lightning).

G' equals G χ; ex.: *g'a* (hare).

ρ equals ρ χ; ex.: *éρ'a* (hair).

K' equals K χ; ex.: *k'a* (hare).

Kρ' equals K ρ χ; ex.: *okρ'al'* (file).

KKρ equals KK ρ; ex.: *wokkpash* (rigorous cold).

T' equals T χ ρ. Pronounce *tchρ* from the back of the palate, with teeth clenched and mouth open; ex.: *t'u* (water). In front of *a*, it equals only T ρ; ex.: *t'a* (wave).

TT' adds to the letter T' the difficult clicking sound. It exists only in the idiom of the Hare and the Dogrib.

L' equals L χ and expresses a blowing from the palate, the tongue being folded in a corner of the mouth; ex.: *l'an* (much); *l'in* (dog).

LL' expresses the same sound combined with the Spanish LL; ex.: *ll'edh* (clay). This letter is peculiar to the Loucheux.

The letters TL, DL, KL are self-explanatory. In TL' and KL' they take on the additional hushing sound of χ.

'KL equals the (clicking) KK digraph combined with L.

DZ and TS require no explanation.

In TTS the T is very hard and sibilant.

SH expresses the English fricative TH, as in *to think*, or the Spanish C; ex.: *sha* (marten). Pronounce *sa* with tongue held between the teeth. The Hareskin substitute for it is FW; ex.: *fwa* (marten), and the "Mountain people" use instead the sound PF, as in *pha* (marten).

DH is pronounced like the English soft TH, as in *thither*; ex.: *édha* (mouth). Pronounce *éza* with tongue between the teeth. Among the Hareskin this letter is replaced by W: ex.: *éwa* (mouth); and among the "Mountain people" by V, as in *éva* (mouth).

TH equals T SH; ex.: *then* (star). Among the Hareskins this letter is replaced by *kfw* ex.: *kfwén*, (flesh); instead of it the Mountain people use the sound *pfu*; ex.: *pfüen* (flesh). The Loucheux sometimes substitute TDH; ex.: *tdha* (mountain).

TTH combines the (clicking) TT with the English fricative *th*; ex.: *tthay* (plate). The Hareskins use *kkw* instead; ex.: *kkwa* (plate); the Mountain people use *ppu*; ex.: *ppüa* (plate."

(14: XLVII – XLVIII)

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PART I

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE DÈNÈ-DINDJIÉ INDIANS

INTRODUCTION

"By combining the word *dènè*, which applies to the Chipewyans, the southernmost tribe, with the word *dindjié*, which describes the Loucheux, the northernmost tribe, I have included under a composite name. . . the entire and as yet little-known nation of American hyperborean Redskins." (14: XIX)

"The *Dènè-dindjié* have been variously referred to as *Athapascans, Chipewyans, North Montagnais* and *Tinnèh*. Those names are improper and inaccurate. *Athpascan* is a name invented by voyageur Hale to describe the Indians of Lake Athabaska; *Chipewyan* or rather *Tchippeweyanawok* (pointed-skins) is the name by which that group is known to the Cree; it applies to the moose or caribou skin tunics pointed in the front and in the back, which were worn by all those Indians and are still the Loucheux garment. The name *Montagnais* applied to those Indians by the *Canadiens* would more properly apply to those who live in the valleys of the Rockies. As for the word *Tinnèh*, it is related to the suffix *ottiné* appended to the distinctive names of the different tribes. It means inhabitants, dwellers, peasants, people in the widest acceptation of the word." (74:823)

1. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

1.1 Territory

"I apply the composite name *Dènè-dindjié* to a large family of American Redskins who live on both slopes of the Rockies and in the plains below, south to north between the latitude 54° N and the Arctic Ocean, and east to west between Hudson Bay and the Cascade range, along the Pacific coast. The *Dènè-dindjié* therefore coopy more than half of the British northwest territory, three quarters of British Columbia and of the American territory of Alaska."

Nomenclature of the *dènè-dindjié* tribes, between the Arctic Ocean and southern Saskatchewan, classified by oblique and quasi-parallel sections, from N.N.W. to S.S.E.

1° *Danè*, men, popularly called the *Ingaliks*.

In Alaska, between Bering Sea and *Koyoukouk*:
1° *Koyoukouk-Kouttânoe*, people of the *Koyoukouk* River.

Between *Koyoukouk* and *Noukloukayet*:
2° *Ounhann-Kouttânoe*, distant people.
3° *Youkponi-Kouttânoe*, people of the Yukon River.

Between the Yukon and Takaïtsky Mountains, left shore:
4° *Kkpayou-Kouttânoe*, the Willow or Birch people. (W.H. Dall)

2° *Dindjié*, men, commonly called the Loucheux. They are Mackenzie's Quarrellers and Richardson's Kuttchin.

Between *Noukloukayet* and the junction of the two upper branches of the Yukon River:
1° *Tpa-nânae-Kouttchin*, the Mound people

Ibidem, right shore:
2° *Tpè-ttchié-dhidié-Kouttchin*, dwellers of the back country, people living far from the water.

Around Fort Yukon:
3° *Kouschâ-Kouttchin*, the Giant people, or from the Yukon; also called *Na-kotchpô-tschig-Kouttchin*, dwellers on the River with the giant shores.

At the junction of Black River (rivière Noire):
4° *Tpion-Kouttchin*, Water people or *Tpendjidheyttset-Kouttchin*, Midway people.

Along the lower Porcupine River:
5° *Rhânae-Kouttchin*, people of the Swift Current River

2. Women of the *Etcha-Ottinė* or Slave tribe

Ibidem, upstream:
6° *Vânae-ta-Kouttchin*, the Lakes people or *Zjén-ta-Kouttchin*, the Muskrats people.

In the Rocky Mountains:
7° *Tdha-Kouttchin*, people of the Mountains, or *Nattsae-Kouttchin*, the Marmots people, or *Klô-ven-Kouttchin*, dwellers on the edge of the Prairies or *Dakkadhae*, the Squint-eyed.

Along the Peel River:
8° *Tpè-tliet-Kouttchin*, people of the Water's end.

Along the lower Mackenzie:
9° *Na-kotchpô-ondjig-Kouttchin*, dwellers on the River with the giant shores.

Between the Mackenzie and the lower Anderson:
10° *Kwitcha-Kouttchin*, people of the Steppes, or *Kodhelhyén-Kouttchin* people at the edge of the Eskimo barren grounds.

3° *Dounié*, men, pop. Montagnais. In the Rocky Mountains, below latitude 66° N.:

1° *Ehta-Gottinè*, people in the air, people of the Mountain.

Ibidem, at Fort Norman, left shore:
2° *Klô-kkè-Gottinè*, dwellers on the Prairies.

Ibidem, right shore:
3° *Kkpay-lon-Gottinè*, people of Willow Lake (lac aux Saules)

4° *Danè*, men

In the Rocky Mountains, towards the Rock-that-soaks-in-the-Water:
4° *Nahan-'nè*, people of the West, *Nahannès*. Small group from a large tribe living west of the central range.

5° *Espa-tpa-Ottinè*, people of the Bighorns, Bad People.

Ibidem, towards the rise of Liard and Peace Rivers
6° *Thè-kka-'nè*, mountain dwellers, Sekani (Sécanais). Part of a larger western tribe.

Along Peace River:
7° *Tsa-'ttinè*, dwellers among the Beavers, Beaver.

In the Rocky Mountains, towards the rise of Bow River (rivière des Arcs) (Alberta):
8° *Tsô-Ottinè*, dwellers among the Beavers, Sarcees, Prairie Beavers, the *Sa-arcis*, "not good" or what the Blackfoot call "Bad People".

I omit here all the western *dènè* tribes, with whom I have had no contacts, such as the Carriers, the Babine, the Atnans, the Shushway, the Hualpai and others.

5° *Dènè*, men; pop. *Hare Indians*

From Eskimo territory to Lake Simpson, along the Anderson River:
1° *NNè-lla-Gottinè*, people at the edge-of-the-world, or *Tpa-pa-Gottinè*, Ocean people, Old people of the Sea, Bastard-Loucheux.

Among the large lakes of the interior, east of the Mackenzie:
2° *Kha-tchô-Gottinè*, dwellers among the Hare, dwellers of the back country, or *Natlé-tpa-Gottinè*, dwellers among the little caribou.

Along the lower Mackenzie, north of Fort Good Hope:
3° *Tchin-tpa-gottinè*, people of the Woods, or *Kha-tpa-gottinè*, Hair people, dwellers among the rabbits.

Ibidem, south of Fort Good Hope:
4° *Kfwè-tpa-Gottinè*, people of the mountains.

North and West of Great Bear Lake:
5° *Èta-tchô-Gottinè* people from Great Cape (Grosse-Pointe) Hair people.

Along the Great Bear Lake Watershed:
6° *Nni-Gottinè*, the moss people

6° *Dènè*, men; pop. Slaves

Along the upper Mackenzie:
1° *Des-nèdhè-yapè-l'Ottinè*, people of the Great River below or *Tpi-kka-Gottinè*, people on the water.

At the junction of Liard River:
2° *Elé-idlin-Gottinè*, people of the fork.

Along Liard River and in the interior:
3° *Ettchéri-dié-Gottinè*, people of the rapids.

Between Liard River and Sharing land, along Black, Beaver, Willow and Mackenzie Rivers:
4° *Ètcha-Ottinè*, Sheltered people

7° *Dounè*, men; pop. Dogribs

Around the south shores of Great Bear Lake:
1° *Ttsè-pottinè*, people of the bark canoes, Lake people

South-east of Great Bear Lake and at the source of the Coppermine River:
2° *Tpa-kfwèlè-pottinè*, Water-anus people, people of the back country.

Around lake La Martre and along the La Martre River:
3° *Tsan-tpié-pottinè*, people of the Excrement Lake.

Along the north bay of Great Slave Lake:
4° *Klin-tchanpè*, Dogribs, Flat Sides of Dogs proper.

8° *Dènè*, men, pop. *Chipewyan*.

On the northern coast and in the eastern bays of Great Slave Lake:
1° *Tpa-'Ilsan-Ottinè*, Water-scum people, Copper Indians or Copper and what the English writers call the Red Knives.

Along Buffalo River (rivière aux Buffles):
2° *Edjiéré-tpou-kkè-Nadé*, the Ox people

Along the Slave River:
3° *Des-nèdhè-Kkè-nadé*, people of the Great River, Chipewyan.

On the south shores of Lake Athabasca:
4° *Yéta-Ottinè*, people in the air, or *Kkpay-tpèlè-Ottinè*, people of the willow floor, Chipewyan.

Between Lake Athabasca and Lake Caribou, also between those two big lakes and Hudson Bay:
5° *Ethen-eltèli*, Caribou-eaters, or *Thè-yé-Ottinè*, people of the Stone fort (Fort-de-pierre).

From Portage la Loche to the North Saskatchewan River:
6° *Thi-lan-Ottinè*, dwellers at the foot of the head; i.e. of the Great glacier.

(2:360-363)

"The *Dènè-dindjié* who live in the North-west territory are divided into tribes that belong to one of four groups: the Montagnais, the Montagnards, the Slaves and the Loucheux.

This division into groups is purely conventional. . . being based only on language. The following is a list of the *Dènè-dindjié* tribes, arranged in geographically 'ascending' order, i.e. from south to north. The Montagnais group includes:

1° The Chipewyan proper: *Thi-lan-ottiné* (people or inhabitants of the top of the head); they live on the shores of Lakes Ile-à-la-Crosse, Froid and du Coeur.

2° The *Athapaskans: Kkpest'aylè kkè ottiné* (people or inhabitants of aspen wood floors); they hunt around Lake Athabaska and along Slave River.

3° The Caribou-eaters or *Ethen-ekdèli*, who live east of the great Lakes Athabaska and Caribou, on the barren grounds that extend to Hudson Bay.

3. Yellowknife Indians

4° The Yellowknife, the Copper Indians described by Franklin: *T'atsan ottiné* Copper people, who live on the plains east and north-east of Great Slave Lake.

The Montagnard group, or Rocky Mountain *Dènè* includes:

1° The Beaver, *Tsa-ttiné* (dwellers among the beavers), together with

2° The Sarcee, who have separated from the Beaver. The Beaver hunt along Peace River; the Sarcee along the upper-Saskatchewan River, hard by the Rockies.

3° The Sekani, *Thè-kka-nè* (dwellers on the rocks), most of whom live near the Fraser river trading posts; only very few venture as far as the upper Peace and Liard Rivers, where they have become noted for their savagery.

4° The *Na'annès* (people of the west) or Richardson's *nok'hannè*. There again, only a small nucleus remains on the eastern slopes of the mountains.

5° The Bad People or *Etlèha-ottiné* (those who behave perversely). Very little is known about these Indians who frequent the chain of mountain peaks in the vicinity of old fort Halkeit. Richardson calls them the *Dteka-ta-uttiné*.

6° Finally, we have the *Esba-t'a-ottiné* or dwellers among the argali.[1] They are Franklin's sheep people and Richardson's *Amba-ta-ut'tiné*. They live in the high mountains between the Strong Current (Courant-Fort) and Nahanni Rivers.

In the group of Slave Indians, I include:

1° The *Etchpè-ottiné* (those who live sheltered). These are called the *Tsilla-ta-ut'tiné* by Richardson, and the *Strong-bows* by Franklin. They hunt along the Liard River.

2° The Slave Indians proper, who may be subdivided into the people of Hay River, Trout Lake, Horn Mountain, the Mackenzie Delta and Fort Norman. The name 'Slave' has been given to them by their southern neighbours, the Cree, because of their timorousness.

3° The *Plats-côtés-de-chien*, "Flat sides of dogs" or Dogribs: *L'in-t-chanpé*. They live east of the Mackenzie, between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake, up to the banks of the Coppermine River. They may be subdivided into two clans: the *Dogrib* of Fort Rae (*T'akfwel-ottiné*) and the *Ttsé-ottiné*. The English call them *Dogrib*.

4° The Hare Indians, whose habitat is the lower Mackenzie area from Fort Norman to the Arctic Ocean. They comprise five tribes, the *Nni-ottiné* or "moss people", who live along the Great Bear Lake watershed; the *K'a-t'a-gottiné* (dwellers among the hares) along the river; the *K'a-tcho-gottiné* (dwellers among the large hares), who

(1) A species of wild sheep found in the Rockies (aploura Montana).

hunt in the interior, between the Mackenzie and the Arctic Ocean: the *Sa-tchô t'u gottiné* (people of Great Bear Lake) whose name indicates their habitat; and finally, the Bastard-Loucheux or *Nné-la-gottiné* (people at the edge of the world), nearest neighbours to the Eskimos in the northern part of the continent. The 'Peaux de Lièvre' are the ones called Hare Indians by the English explorers and *Ka-cho-'dtinné* by Richardson.

5º The *Eta-gottiné* or "mountain people". They live in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains, between the *Esba-t'a-ottiné* and the Loucheux. Richardson calls them the *Dahà-dtinné*.

To the Loucheux or *Dindjié* groups belong thirteen tribes which are spread from the Anderson River in the east to Alaska and the Pacific coast to where, as in the Mackenzie area, they are surrounded by Eskimo.

Those thirteen tribes are:

1º the *Kwitcha-Kuttchin* or "people of the steppes" of the Arctic Ocean, between the Anderson and the Mackenzie;

2º the *Nakotchpò-ondjig Kuttchin*, or people of the river with the high banks, Mackenzie;

3º the *T'étllet-Kuttchin* or Peel River people;

4º the *Dakkadhè*, (squinters) also called the *Tdha-kké-Kuttchin* (mountain race), and the *Klo-vèn-Kuttchin* (people at the edge of the prairies), who live in the Rocky Mountains between the Mackenzie River and Alaska;

5º the *Vaen* or *Zjen Kuttchin* (people of the lakes or of the rats), whose territory is the Porcupine River area;

6º the *Han-Kuttchin* (river people) same territory;

7º the *Artez-Kuttchin*;

8º the *Kutchià-Kuttchin* (giant people) who live along the upper Yukon;

9º the *Tchandjaeri Kuttchia*, who hunt along the Black River;

10º the people of the hills or *Tanan Kuttchin* (people of the mountains), along the Tanana River;

11º the *T'éttchié-dhidié*, or people sitting in the water;

12º the *Intsi-Dindjitch*, or men of iron, and lastly

13º the *Tsoes-tsièg Kuttchin* who live along the lower Yukon.

(14:XIX-XX)

4. Dogrib Indians

1.2 **Trail-blazing**

". . . when an Indian first passes anywhere, a few notches cut in the bark of trees, an occasional broken twig or sticks planted in the snow, are so many ways of enabling him to retrace his steps if snow has covered up his tracks."
(111:376)

2. PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

2.1 Anthroposcopic description

". . . I shall merely attempt to sketch the general type of *dènè-dindjié* Indian. . . The *Dènè-Dindjié's* head is elongated, pointed at the chin, high-domed at the top. It is widest at the cheekbones. The forehead is fairly high, but receding, conical, depressed at the temples, with a rounded protuberance at the top. The arch of the eyebrows is well-defined but, set very high and is quite prominent. The eyes are large, dark, ardent and sparkle with a distinctly ophidian glint. The upper eyelid is heavy, somewhat slanted. . . The nose is generally aquiline when seen in profile, but broad and slightly flattened on frontal view; the nasal aperture is quite flared especially among the Loucheux, whose noses are also more prominent and more hooked. This is partly due to their custom of wearing swan-bones and other ornaments in a perforation of the nasal septum. Their mouth is wide, set with small, closely serrated and lustrously enamelled teeth. The upper lip overhangs the lower one and curls up slightly, especially among the mountain dwellers, whose features recall those of a bird of prey. The chin is pointed, undershot in some cases, overshot in others. Additional characteristics are. . . ebony black hair, coarse, shiny, worn short by the women as well as by the men, and hanging in long strands over the eyes and shoulders. Their complexion is very varied, even among members of the same tribe. However, even those with the fairest skin never have the mat, rosy white complexion of the European; their skin always has a swarthy tinge to it and appears to be quite thick although it is smooth, fine textured and hairless. Their flesh is not soft and flabby, like that of the European, but firm, hard and taut. . . The *Dènè-dindjié* are generally tall and well proportioned; they are full-chested and never show any tendency to obesity."
(14:XX-XXI)

"The Montagnais or *Dènè-dindjié* is tall. . . averaging five feet eight to five feet ten inches in height. However, the children develop only slowly until they are fifteen or sixteen years old. . . The Montagnais might be described as follows: his head is long, pointed at the base and high-domed at the top; his hair is black, flat, long, hard and shiny, parted at the forehead and falling in long locks on the shoulder. Although fairly high, the forehead is receding, conical and depressed at the temples. The eyes

5. Hareskin family winter travelling

are brown, slightly narrow. . . the eyelids big and heavy, the cheek-bones prominent and the chins pointed. It is by the nose and the mouth that the different nations of this family can be distinguished: the southern Montagnais have an aquiline nose, with a flat area in the middle; the Yellowknife and the Loucheux have, what is generally called a sheep's nose. As for the Slave, their nose consists of little more than open nostrils. All those Indians have a wide, gaping mouth and fleshy lips. . . the foot and the hand are small and well formed; the legs, thin and bandied. The northern Montagnais are swarthier than those of the south."
(59: 489-490)

"Those Indians are tall men. Men six feet tall are not rare. . . They have prominent cheek bones, a depressed, elongated head; and a very pointed chin."
(105:369)

3. DEMOGRAPHY

3.1 Composition of population

". . . 780 to 800 Indians, at least, died from measles. . . in less than six weeks, on a population of about 5 to 6,000 people inhabiting the Mackenzie River district."

3.2 Diseases

"Before the coming of Europeans, they knew no other diseases than rheumatism, conjunctivitis and deafness."
(14:XXI)

"Measles is fatal to Indians who catch it because, as soon as the rash breaks out, they take off their clothes, expose themselves to cold air and roll naked in the snow."
(126:184)

"Measles or scarlet fever. . . that disease which came up with the boats of the Red River Company, wrought and still works great havoc among our redskin populations. . ."
(126:183)

". . . influenza which since the winter of 1864, works great havoc among the Indians."
(119:476)

3.3 Disabilities

". . . no hunchbacks or cripples are found among them."
(59:488)

4. COMMUNICATION

Petitot's chief contribution in the field of linguistics is characterized by the writing of his Dictionary of the *Dènè-dindjié* tongue (dictionnaire de la langue *Dènè-dindjié*). We shall first consider the aims, and the sources of this work, then the circumstances under which it was undertaken, adding a few remarks on the short grammar that forms part of the dictionary.

In his foreword, the author sets out the characteristics of the *Dènè-dindjié* language, and gives examples of its similarity to other living languages. He comes to the conclusion that the *dènè-dindjié* originated in Asia and that the American variety derives largely from that source. At the end of this chapter, we shall include a few notes on Indian graphic designs.

4.1 French-dènè-dindjié Dictionary

At the same time as he put out his French-Eskimo Vocabulary (*Vocabulaire français-esquimau*), Petitot published his *Dictionnaire de la langue Dènè-dindjié*, a dictionary of the *Dènè-dindjié* language, of Montagnais or Chipewyan, Hareskin and Loucheux, dialects, also including a great many words peculiar to seven other dialects of the same language. His dictionary also comprises a grammar and synoptic tables of conjugations.

In the preface to his work, Petitot sums up the aims, and sources of his dictionary together with the circumstances leading to its publication.

> "In gathering and in classifying alphabetically the words of several dialects of the. . . tongue spoken by the *Dènè* and *dindjié* tribes, my sole purpose was to acquire promptly and systematically the idiom spoken by the people I was called upon to evangelize.
>
> Long before my superiors suggested that I publish my handwritten notes, my colleagues in the North-West had gladly transcribed them for their own use.
>
> But if the Oblate missionaries in Mackenzie and Saskatchewan areas thus kindly held my work in such regard, I must also record here that, with their consent, I have incorporated their linguistic data, after duly adapting them to the method I had devised.
>
> In the column of Chipewyan or Montagnais speech, will be found all the *dènè* expressions used by Bishops LaFlèche, Taché, Faraud and Grandin in

the prayer books and hymnals compiled by those first apostles of the *Dénè* nation at the beginning of our missions in the North-West. I have also included all the words contained in Rev. Father Grouard's condensed Bible stories currently being published by Mgr Faraud, apostolic vicar of Athabaska-Mackenzie.

My dictionary is also indebted to Mgr I. Clut, Bishop of Erindel, auxiliary to Mgr Faraud, and also to Rev. Father Grouard, for words used among the Montagnais of Lake Athabaska (A); to Rev. Father LeGoff for many expressions peculier to Isle-à-la-Crosse and Lake Caribou (T). Finally, I am indebted to Rev. Father Gascon for all the Montagnais words he collected in 1862 during his stay at Fort Liard.

While I pursued strictly on my own, my study of the Hareskin dialect, I must acknowledge that my kind companion and friend, Father Séguin, was first a precursor and later an associate of mine in my study of the Loucheux of *Dindjié* dialect. My departure from Good Hope had left a gap in the vocabulary of the latter dialect; that gap has recently been filled in the Alaska territory, by Mgr d'Erindel, with the help of Rev. Father A. LeCorre, who graciously sent me the manuscript of their joint compilation."
(14:VII)

Petitot then explains the plan followed in the writing of his dictionary.

"It contains the three principal dialects. The southern one, or Montagnais; the northern one or Loucheux; and the Hareskin, which can be considered as in-between the other two because it is perfectly understood by the Dogrib and the Slaves.

In addition, it contains many words peculiar to other *dènè-dindjié* dialects. Such words are followed, in parenthesis, by the name in CAPITAL letters of the respective tribes by whom they are used.

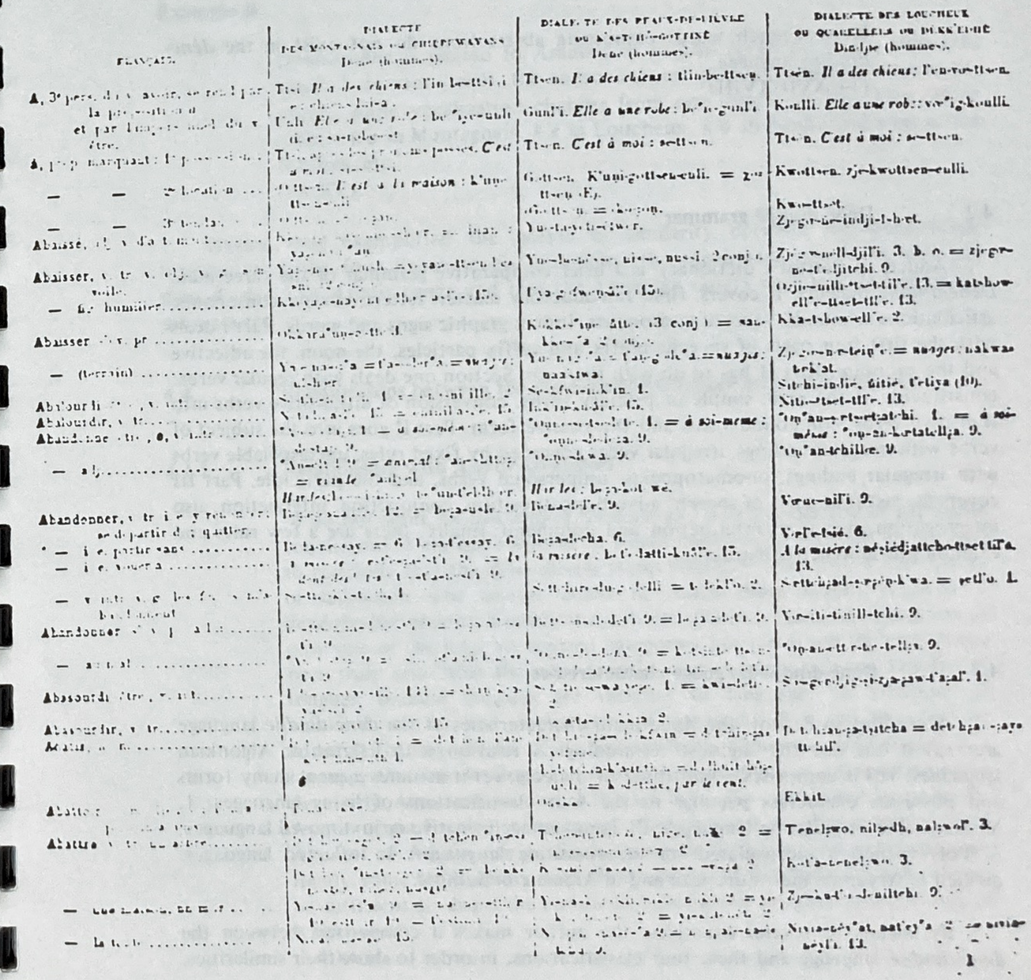
Among the various synonymous words entered opposite the French equivalent in each column, the first word listed is the most current one, the proper word. Subsequent words are also appropriate but of lesser currency. They are followed by expressions, phrases and circumlocutions used in picturesque or jocular speech.

At times, I give in italics, after certain Indian words, a literal translation of such words, even preserving inversions; I do this when the French word cannot adequately express the meaning of the Indian word, or when the latter presents in itself some pungent or novel turn of speech.

All verbs, adjectives or nouns admitting of conjugation or declension are followed, in the dictionary, by a number which refers the reader to one of the examples given in the synoptic tables of verbs.

DICTIONNAIRE
DE LA
LANGUE DÉNÉ-DINDJIÉ

A



6. Specimen page from the *Dènè-dindjié* Language Dictionary

Wherever necessary, I have supplied a few examples illustrating the use of certain words that might be misunderstood.

I never express the plural of words, for the reason that they have no plural endings.

For the same reason, genders are not shown, there being no gender in nouns or adjectives.

All nouns denoting kinship or describing any part of the human body are expressed. . . in some abstract way.

Many French words expressing abstractions do not exist in the *dènè-dindjié* language."
(14:XVII-XVIII)

4.2 Dènè-dindjié grammar

Added to Petitot's dictionary is a brief comparative grammar of the three main *Dènè-dindjié* dialects. It covers, first, introductory matter: letters, vowels, consonants, articulations or sounds, value of consonants, Indian graphic signs and words. Part I deals with the first four parts of speech: prefix and suffix particles, the noun, the adjective and the pronoun. Part II has to do with the verb. Section one deals with regular verbs: constituents of the verb, simple or primary verbs, conversion of intransitive verbs into transitive verbs, compound verbs and the passive form. Part II goes into the subject of verbs with irregular endings, irregular verbs governed by fixed rules, unclassifiable verbs with irregular endings, onomatopoeias, unipersonal verbs, and the participle. Part III covers the last four parts of speech: adverb, postposition, conjunction, interjection; also interrogation, negation, interdiction and command; finally, there are a few rules and examples of sentence construction.

4.3 Dènè-dindjié language characteristics

According to Petitot, the three main characteristics of the *dènè-dindjié* language are: (a) it has not the slightest terminological relation with Eskimo or Algonkian languages; (b) it comprises a multitude of dialects; (c) it assumes a great many forms and possesses characters peculiar to the four classifications of living languages: 1. Monosyllabic or isolating languages; 2. Turanian agglutinative or juxtaposed languages; 3. Polysynthetic, encapsulated, or incorporating languages; 4. Inflected languages, divided in Aryan or Indo-European and in Aramaic or Semitic.

By means of several examples, the author makes a comparison between the *dènè-dindjié* language and these four classifications, in order to show their similarities.

Here are two of his examples:

Example I:

"Like the Turanian languages, *dènè-dindjié* has many words formed without any connection, by agglutination, preserving their respective individuality, for instance from *t'a* (water or wave) and *er* (smoke), we get *t'a-llèré* (smoke-water) i.e. fog."
(14:XIV)

Example II:

Dènè-dindjié is related to Aramaic or Semitic languages in the following ways: 1. In root words, the consonants are prefixed and characterize the idiom, while vocalization changes from one dialect to the other. Hare, rabbit: *k'a* in Montagnais, *k'è* in Loucheux, *k'o* in Alaska and west of the Rockies, etc."
(14:XV)

Having thus exemplified the points of similarity between the *dènè-dindjié* language and the four linguistic classifications, the missionary concludes that the *dènè-dindjié* is of Asiatic origin and that the American variety derives largely from the same source.

4.4 Relationships between the dènè-dindjié language and other languages

4.4.1 Relationship with Asiatic languages

"I do not want, in this regard, to draw any overly restrictive or particular conclusions. I am not a scholar; it would therefore be too rash on my part to conclude that the *dènè-dindjié* stems primarily from this or that family of languages. The matter could be much more readily resolved if *dènè-dindjié* presented solely the definite and homogeneous characters of only one of the large recognized categories; but this is not the case. It has been truly said "that the same families of men speak the same families of tongues because tongues are varieties of language, an attribute of mankind, just as men are varieties of mankind." If it can therefore be adduced that by reason of its polysynthetic elements, *dènè-dindjié* is a language that has developed in America, in as much as encapsulation is a peculiarly American process, I think I have also established its primarily Asiatic origin because it has many other elements peculiar to languages of Asia or of Asiatic origin. Such therefore is the general conclusion we finally come to. It agrees with the teachings of the Bible and will, I hope, be sufficient to dispel the erroneous belief in the absolute autochthony of Americans."
(14:XVII)

4.4.2 Relationships with the languages of America

"It being established that one or two large families of North American Indians immigrated to America by way of Asia, we have only to look for linguistic affinities between those families and other Indians living more to the south to establish clearly that the American variety is largely of Asiatic origin. Well, I have had the occasion, in 1865, to ascertain such affinities between the *dènè-dindjié* language and that of the *Apache* nation, a tribe of the *Nabajo*, when I read a book, published in the United States, entitled: "*New-Mexico and its people*, by W.W.H. Davis, attorney, New-York, 1857." I found there fragments of Indians vocabularies collected by Spanish missionnaries, cited by the author, and from which I borrowed the following *nabajo* terms. After comparison it seems to me that their language is identical with the *dènè-dindjié*, and constitutes merely a different dialect, with the addition of certain words unknown to the *Dènè* and which probably stem from the *Nabajo* mixing with the redskin tribes with which they are associated. If I dared venture an opinion, I would go as far as to say the *Nabajos* and the *Tanos*, of which nation they form a part, are just as foreign to the rest of the *Apache*, the *Piros*, the *Tégwas* and the *Kwères*, and also the *Zuni* and the *Moqui*, as the *Sarcee*, another *dènè* tribe of upper Saskatchewan, are foreign to the Blackfoot nation, among which they live and which has adopted them. The *Nabajo* of New Mexico and the *Sarcee* of the western prairies, who constitute the link between the latter and the *Dènè* and *Dindjié* nation, are therefore probably the forerunners, the pathfinders of that large

Table 1

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF THE NABAJO WITH THE DÈNÈ AND THE DINDJIÉ

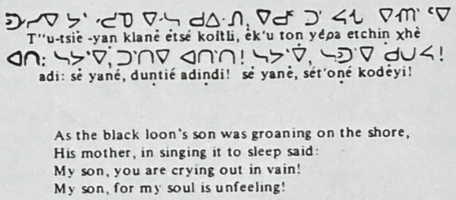
	Nabajo	*Dènè (from various dialects)*	*Dindjié*
Five	*ichla*	*la-kkè.* = *inl'a* (a hand)	*inl'adl gwenlle.*
Dog	*kli*	*kli.* = *l'en.* = *tl'in*	*l'én.*
Horse	*kli-cha*	*kli-tchô.* = *l'intchôp*	*l'én-tchpô.*
Grass	*klôs*	*klô* = *tlô*	*klô.*

Source: Dictionnaire de la langue Dène-dindjié: XVII

family's trek to the south. But who knows whether the nations of Mexico and Peru do not likewise have a strong affinity with our *Dènè* and our *Dindjié* since several ethnologists have considered the *Nabajos* as *Aztecs* or as Mexicans? In fact when I recently had an opportunity in Nancy, to chat with a learned linguist from Lima, don G. Pacheco Zegarra, who has scholarly knowledge of *Quichoa*, language of the Incas, we were both amazed to find that the *quichoa* and the *dènè-dindjié* have exactly the same very complicated alphabet, having as many as 60 to 65 sounds requiring an equal number of phonetic signs. The double letters, the clicking, guttural, palatal and dental sounds are so completely similar that we remain convinced that the relationship between those two languages could not be limited to those features. I regretted my inability to discuss the subject with that scholar long enough for us to ascertain the existence of still other correlations."
(14:XVII)

Table 2

EXAMPLE OF DÈNÈ HANDWRITING FROM A HARESKIN FABLE


T''u-tsiè -yan klanè ètsé koitli, èk'u ton yépa etchin xhè
adi: sè yané, duṇtié adiṇdi! sè yanè, sét'oṇé kodèyi!

As the black loon's son was groaning on the shore,
His mother, in singing it to sleep said:
My son, you are crying out in vain!
My son, for my soul is unfeeling!

4.5 Indian graphic signs

Western Indians having no handwriting, the pioneer Oblate missionaries adapted to the Montagnais dialects the monosyllabic conventional characters devised by Evans, missionary among the Maskegon Indians of Lake Winnipeg. But Petitot considers this device inadequate because it does not fully answer the requirements of the *dènè-dindjié* idiom which has no less than 71 phonetic sounds. For this reason, it is difficult to apply.

MATERIAL CULTURE

5. WEAPONS

5.1 Raw materials

"The weapons used by the *Dènè* and the *Dindjié*, at the time Europeans came to this country, barely a century ago, were made of wood, of bone and of stone. Copper and iron were unknown to them. . . Even at the present time, stone is still the material most in use, together with metal."
(58:530)

". . . no object made of bronze or of copper is ever found among the *Dènè-dindjié*."
(58:531)

"Stone weapons. . . are made of silex, petrosilex, phonolite ("clinkstone") and kersantite."
(14:XXXI)

5.2 Hand Weapons

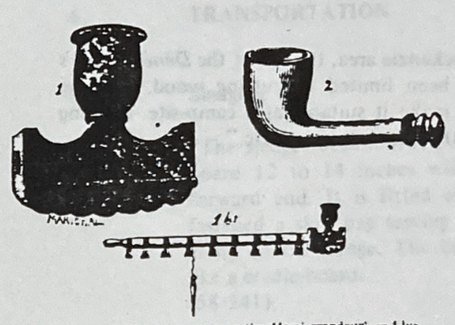
5.2.1 Knife

"The *Dènè's* crescent-shaped scraper-knives (*sun-kèzè*), were originally probably made of stone and were also used in the tanning of skins, although they more usually served to cut clothes and meats."
(58:542-543) (Pl. 7, No. 3)

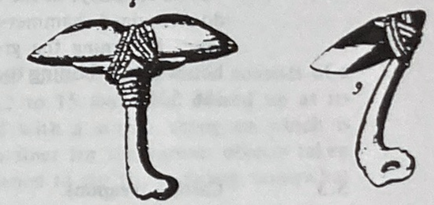
"There are frequent references in *Dènè-dindjié* stories to the teeth (*ru*) of giant beavers, said to have been used as knives."
(58:542)

"The ice-chisel (*èté*). – This instrument, of everyday use in chopping holes in the ice of lakes and rivers, so as to spread nets to catch fish or beavers, or simply to draw water, consisted originally of a ram's horn or that of musk-ox mounted at the end of a long wooden shaft. Hence its name *èté*, which means horn, although the chisel proper is now made of iron. The escoubane or large ice-skimmer (*l'urtthayé*). Indispensable adjunct to the ice-chisel: it consists of a net stretched on a wooden hoop whose tips are fastened together to a handle. It is used to clean up holes made in the ice, i.e. to remove chips left by the ice-chisel.
(58:540) (Pl.8, No. 23)
(Pl.9, No. 24)

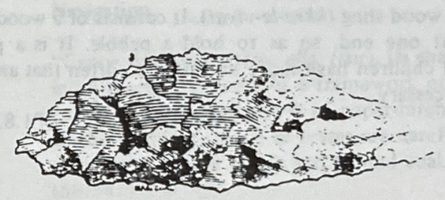
"Among tribes who have been taught to use metal, many stone objects are still in use. . . such as whetstones. . ."
(58:530)

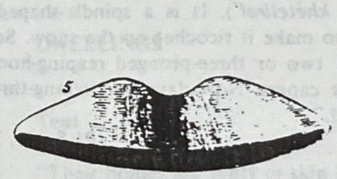


DÉNÉ. — 1 et 2. Calumets en serpentine (demi-grandeur). — 1 bis. Calumet emmanché. — Dessins du R. P. Petitot (voir p. 530).



DÉNÉ. — 8. Hache dénè, danoise et tibétienne, emmanchée. — 9. Hache esquimaude, polynésienne et égyptienne, emmanchée. — Dessins du R. P. Petitot (voir p. 531).





DÉNÉ. — 3. Couteau en phonolithe (demi-grandeur). — 4. Dard de flèche en quartz. — 5. Hache en kersanton (réduite au cinquième). — 6. Lancette en phonolithe (demi-grandeur). — 7. Pierres à fusées en calcaire (réduite au tiers). — Dessins du R. P. Petitot (voir p. 530).

7. *Dènè-dindjié* artifacts

5.2.2 **Axe**

"Until recently, in the lower Mackenzie area, the use of the *Dènè-dindjié's* double-edged hammer-axe has been limited to cutting wood, splitting trees, flattening the ground to make it suitable as a camp-site, mashing bones before boiling them to extract their marrow, etc."
(58:531) (P1.7, No. 5.8)

5.3 **Casting Weapons**

5.3.1 **Sling**

"The sumpitan or wood sling (*kkra-la-yiyai*). It consists of a wooden shaft split three ways at one end, so as to hold a pebble. It is a primitive instrument that all children have made and used so often that any longer description is unnecessary."
(58:540) (P1.8, No. 21)

5.3.2 **Boomerang**

"The boomerang (*nalzous; khètellral'*). It is a spindle-shaped piece of wood that is hurled so as to make it ricochet on the snow. Some tribes make it in the shape of a two or three-pronged reaping-hook. It flies through the air in irregular capers. Nowadays boomerang-throwing has become solely a game of skill."
(58:540) (P1.8, No. 22, 22 bis)

5.3.3 **Harpoon**

"Among tribes who have been taught to use metal, many stone objects are still in use. . . such as javelin and harpoon heads. . ."
(58:530)

5.3.4 **Bow and arrows**

"The bow (*elt'in*) and the arrows. – The bow is usually made of a one-piece branch of willow. The string is of reindeer sinew. There are many kinds of arrows. The shaft is made of "amélanchier" and the head is of bone. The arrowhead is either serrated (*detlèné*), or sharp (*ètè-chel*), or blunted (*tinl'*). The names for arrows vary according to dialects. Quartz or silex (*kkratàré*) arrowheads are now very rare."
(58:540) (P1. 7, No. 4)
(P1. 8, No. 20)

6. TRANSPORTATION

6.1 **Sledging**

"The sledge (*besh-tchènè*). – Made of birch or white fir, it consists of a board 12 to 14 inches wide and 12 to 15 feet long, curved up at its forward end. It is fitted all around with a sturdy thong to which is fastened a skin bag serving as a container for the various objects taken along on the sledge. The bag is fastened to the thong railing, somewhat like a cradle-board.
(58:541) (P1. 10, No. 34)

6.2 **Navigation**

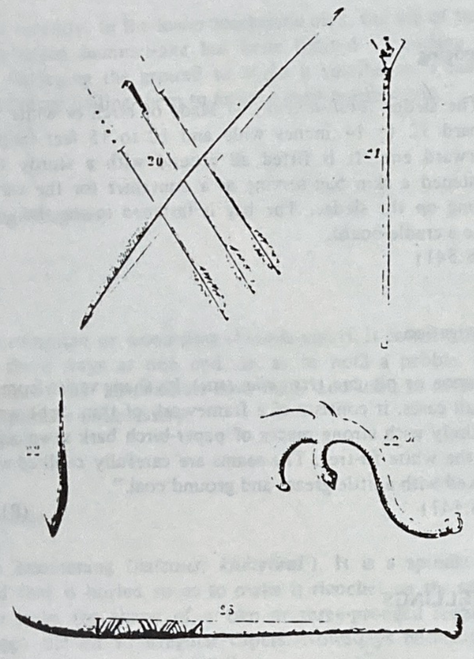
"Canoe or pirague (*ttsi; ella; ttsu*). Its shape varies from tribe to tribe, but in all cases, it consists of a framework of thin, light wooden ribs covered entirely with strong pieces of paper-birch bark sewn with *watap* or roots of the white fir-tree. The seams are carefully caulked with dissolved resin mixed with a little grease and ground coal."
(58:541) (P1.10, No. 36 to 39)

7. DWELLINGS

7.1 **Tent**

"Their homes are tents or skin lodges (*nipali, naupalé, nivia, etcheyédé*) or leaf huts. . . The Montagnais, the Beaver and the Slave live three years in tents of caribou or moose skin sewn together and laid upon a conical framework of poles stuck into the ground and fastened at the top. The Hareskin and the Loucheux build spherical tents. . . In both types of tents, a thick layer of fir-tree boughs, covered with robes of reindeer, buffalo or white bear skins. . . makes up the floor, table, seats and bed. In the middle is the fireplace, from which the smoke escapes through an opening at the top of the tent. In winter, the base of those dwellings are banked up with snow, inside as well as outside, to make them warmer.
. . . those dwellings are cold in clear weather and dark at all times. For this reason the Indian will generally say: "*Sas-ansé lanttè se-kᶜnûé*" My house is like a bear-den."
(59:531)

"The *Dènè-dindjié* live in conical or dome-shaped tents of moose skins, or reindeer skins, either haired or dehaired. Those lodges are called *nanbali, nonpalé, nivia, nijyé, ètchiédé*, according to dialects. They rest on cones of lashed poles or on hoops fastened to the ground. Smoke from a fire which



8. *Dènè-dindjié* artifacts
NORTHWESTERN AMERICANS. 20. *Dènè-dindjié* bow an arrows – 21. Hareskin, sling-shot – 22. Chipewyan, boomerang – 22. bis. Hareskin and Loucheux, boomerang – 23. Ice-cutter.

is never allowed to go out escapes through a hole at the top. Certain tribes. . . are satisfied with huts of fir-boughs (*kpuni kowa*). . . a few fir boughs covered with old robes of reindeer, buffalo or moose hide, serve as the Indian's table, work shop, seat and bed. He sits in it cross-legged and sleeps in it with the rest of his family or visitors, or uninvited guests. . ."
(14:XXV)

"Among tribes who have been taught to use metal, many stone objects are still in use such as. . . lamps. . ."
(58:530)

"If dry wood becomes scarce. . . the Indian will set the forest on fire."
(14:XXV)

". . . Indians make fire with compact (iron) pyrites."
(14:XXXIII)

8. CLOTHING

8.1 Shoulders and hips

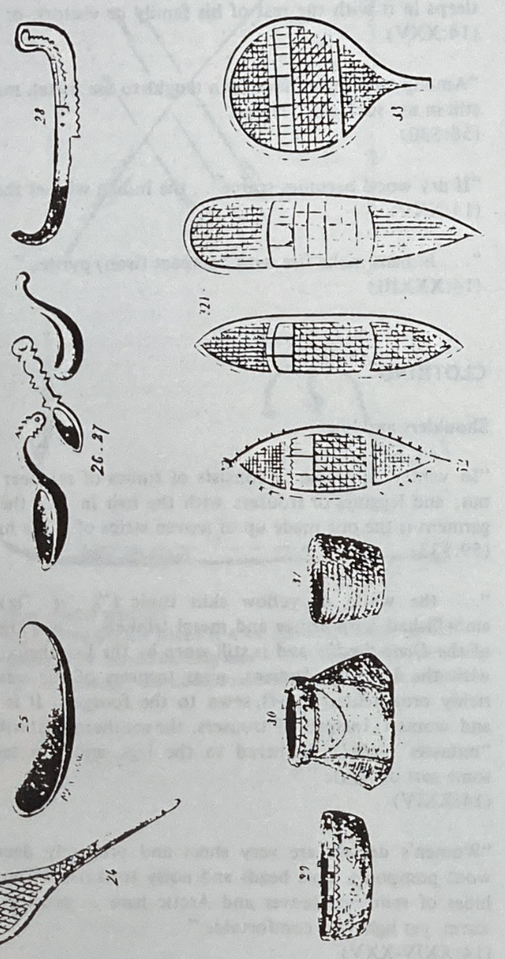
"In winter, clothing. . . consists of tunics of reindeer skins with the hair out, and leggings or trousers with the hair in. But the country's warmest garment is the one made up of woven strips of white hareskin."
(59:533)

". . . the white or yellow skin tunic (*'i, 'iè, 'ig*), whose tails were embellished with fringe and metal trinkets. . . was the primitive costume of the *Dènè-dindjié* and is still worn by the Loucheux; the latter, together with the Hareskin Indians, wear trousers of the same material, likewise richly ornamented (*kia-i*), sewn to the footgear. It is worn by both men and women. Instead of trousers, the southernmost tribes wear leggings or "mitasses" (*shel'*), gathered to the legs, and a rectangular loincloth of some sort of fabric."
(14:XXIV)

"Women's dresses are very short and profusely decorated with fringe, wool pompoms, glass beads and noisy trinkets. . . During the winter, the hides of reindeer, beaver and Arctic hare. . . provide. . . clothing that is warm, yet light and comfortable."
(14:XXIV-XXV)

8.2 The foot

"The usual footwear is the moccasin (*k'é*). . . which encloses and moulds the foot."
(14:XXV)



9. *Dènè-dindjié* artifacts

"Snowshoes (*"ay; "a; "ey*). A snowshoe consists of a frame of wood (willow, birch or fir) of varying shape according to the tribe which makes it, and is strung with a weave of slender strips called babiches. The woven openwork is strengthened by two or three crosspieces set into the frame. The user places his foot in the middle area between the crosspieces, where it is held by a thong fastened around the ankle while the tip of the foot sinks into the snow through an opening just under the toes. The forepart of the snowshoe is called the head and the back part the tail. Snowshoes are made in various sizes ranging in length from twelve inches (children's snowshoes) to six and seven feet (hunting snowshoes)."
(58:541) (Pl. 9, No. 32, 32 bis, 33)

8.3 **The making of snowshoes**

". . . a small object made of bone (*kuray, koka*) or of ivory, sometimes of metal, is used to braid snowshoe webbing. . . This method of braiding forms a network of hexagonal openings resulting from the superposition of diamond-shaped plaits over rectangular ones. Those netting-needles are also used in knitting strips of Arctic hareskin into seamless garments. . .
(58:543)

"Bone and stone scrapers used by the women to remove superfluous fat and flesh from hides, preparatory to tanning. . . Those instruments. . . are simply sharp-edged stones or pieces of reindeer skin-bones, level-edged and lightly serrated. . ."
(58:542)

9. ADORNMENT

9.1 Ornaments

9.1.1 Hair

"The wearing of a large tonsure. . . is also a Montagnais custom. At one time, both men and women parted their hair over their forehead and let it hang down on both sides of the face. Nowadays only the old wear their hair that way. . . The younger people model their styles on those of French Canadian half-breeds. . .
(14:XXV)

". . . on solemn occasions, after having smeared their hair with powdered red ochre mixed with melted tallow. . . the *Dènè-dindjié* sprinkle it over with the white down of aquatic birds, such as swans, geese and ducks."
(29:693)

9.2 **Body Care**

"At one time the *Dènè* and the *Dindjié* never washed themselves; however they would clean up their hands and face with grease or a piece of fish flesh. . . Even today, they will wear a shirt until it falls in shreds; and when they want to dress up, they will wear two or three shirts on top of the dirty one. . Their bodies are alive with vermin."
(14:XXV)

9.3 **Tattooing**

"Tattooing is limited. . to a few small parallel lines that the women will wear on their chin, at the corners of the mouth or on the cheek bones. The men are rarely tattooed, but they do paint their cheeks, chins, foreheads and noses with vermilion."
(14:XXV)

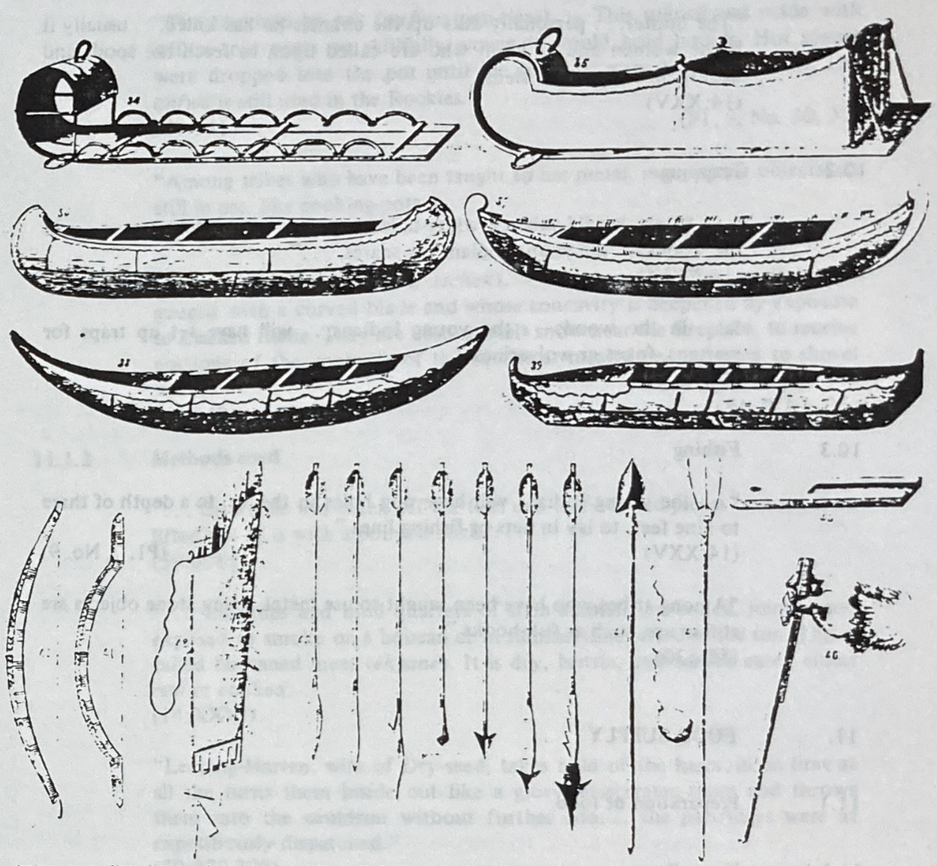
10. METHODS OF LIVELIHOOD

10.1 **Hunting**

"The provider Indian has set out; he is taking along his whole family, his skin tent, his clothing and his weapons; his only vehicle is a long birch board curled upward at the front, dragged directly along the ground by 2 or 3 dogs. . . He personally blazes the trail on snowshoes until he reaches a spot with a sufficient supply of dead wood and enough game tracks. There, he pitches his tent, and scouts around until he has killed a few animals. Then, it is up to his helper to dress the game and cut up the venison and stash it safely away. . ."
(111:376)

"They hunt reindeer in various ways: by pursuing it on foot, or on snowshoes, over frozen lakes, or in the woods or the prairies; or by trapping it in nooses or snares set up in large enclosed pounds into which they drive herds of this animal. In summer and fall, the *Dènè-dindjié* lie in wait for the reindeer at certain narrow stretches of water where herds are in the habit of crossing in their periodic migrations from the Arctic Ocean into the interior, and vice versa. As soon as a herd has started to swim across, it is at once surrounded and slaughtered. . . *Dènè* names for reindeer are *étié, éthen, èkfwen,* that is meat, food."
(14:XXV)

"Mountain sheep and goats are stalked, as are beaver and moose. A beaver or elk that has been allowed to escape usually remains lost to the hunter."
(14:XXV)



AMÉRICAINS DU NORD-OUEST. — 34. Traîneau à viande. — 35. Traîneau de voyageur ou carriole. — 36. Canot chippewayan. — 37. Id. — 38. Canot peau-de-lièvre et flanc-de-chien. — 39. Canot loucheux. — 40. Arc esquimau (d'homme fait). — 41. Id. (de jeune homme). — 42. Carquois esquimau, avec épissoirs en ivoire. — 43. Flèches esquimaudes. — 44. Harpon esquimau. — 45. Instrument servant à lancer la javeline, le harpon et le trident (*notcark*). — 46. Manière de lancer le harpon à l'aide du notcark. — 47. Trident esquimau; — dessins du R. P. Petitot (voir p. 541).

10. *Dènè-dindjié* sleds, boats, etc.

"The hunter. . . personally cuts up the animals he has killed. . . usually it is the women and children who are called upon to fetch the spoils and haul them to camp on sleds."
(14:XXV)

10.2 **Trapping**

". . . to catch wild rabbits, white-tailed ptarmigan or willow grouse. . . in the woods. . . the young Indians lay snares. . . ."
(14:XXVI)

". . . in the woods. . . the young Indians. . . will have set up traps for martens, foxes or wolverines."
(14:XXVI)

10.3 **Fishing**

". . . the young Indians will have dug holes in the ice, to a depth of three to nine feet, to lay in nets or fishing lines."
(14:XXV) (Pl. 7, No. 9)

"Among tribes who have been taught to use metal, many stone objects are still in use, such as fish-hooks."
(58:530)

11. FOOD SUPPLY

11.1 Preparation of food

11.1.1 Ustensils

"Spoons or "mikouanes" (micouennes) (*l'us; etchè-unliné*). – Made of wood or of the horns of musk oxen, of wild sheep or mountain goats, the spoons are frequently of very large size for they are not meant to fit into the user's mouth; they are actually only ladles or porringers. They are also used to skin the fat out of broth by a simple process. The Indians sit around the large kettle and each in turn glides the back of his large ladle along the surface of the boiling liquid and then licks off the fat. This is repeated until all the fat has been taken up. Usually, to facilitate the process, a handful of snow is thrown into the kettle, to congeal the fat."
(58:540-541) (Pl. 9, No. 26, 27)

"Punnets or receptacles of birch-bark. They are called *kkri t'ili* or *kkri tthay*, according as to whether they are shaped like a cauldron on a dish."
(58:541) (Pl. 9, No. 29)

"The cauldron or pot (*onfwa; pay-t'èni*). – This utensil was made with willow-tree roots so skillfully woven it would hold liquids. Hot stones were dropped into the pot until the contents were brought to boil. The *onfwa* is still used in the Rockies."
(58:541) (Pl. 9, No. 30, 31)

"Among tribes who have been taught to use metal, many stone objects are still in use, like cooking-pots.
(58:530)

"The dishes (*tthay; kkwa; ttchek*). – These are merely small boards gouged with a curved blade and whose concavity is deepened by exposure to a naked flame. They are used to melt snow near the fireplace, to receive portions of the contents of the kettles at meal time, and even to shovel snow."
(58:540) (Pl. 9, No. 25)

11.1.2 Methods used

". . . the kettle was taken off the fire, and half-cooked pieces of meat were lifted out of it with a pointed stick. . . ."
(59:378)

". . . the sides and hind quarters of slain animals are boned, jointed and exposed to smoke on a boucan or in summertime, dried in the sun. This is called buccaned meat (*ékpané*). It is dry, brittle, and can be eaten either raw or cooked.
(14:XXVI)

"Leaping-Marten, wife of Dry-seed, takes hold of the hares; in no time at all she turns them inside out like a glove, eviscerates them and throws them into the cauldron without further ado. . . the partridges were as expetitiously dispatched."
(59:377-378)

"Dry-seed asked me if I wanted to taste of the contents of a certain unlidded cooking pot. I was served a kind of yellowish and gummy glue. I asked him about the ingredients of this soup. Pointing to a piece of parchment that served as a door to his hut, and to a level-edged piece of moose-bone, he said: "This is what the soup is made of, and this is my cooking implement."
(59:378)

11.2 Foodstuffs

11.2.1 Meats

". . . they abhor dog-meat, and never eat it. . .".
(14:28)

"The animals which provide the *Dènè-dindjié* with food are the barren-ground reindeer, the great woodland reindeer or caribou, the moose or American elk, the bison, the musk-ox or ovibos, the argali or Rocky Mountain sheep, the bighorn or mountain sheep, the beaver and the ondatra or muskrat."
(14:XXV)

"If the Indian runs out of food entirely . . . he will have someone scrape the skins of his tent, or his wife's leather tunic, so as to get a. . . jelly-like substance called *elt'anl'-tsin.*"
(14:XXVI)

11.2.2 Vegetables

". . . they are fond of the young roots of the "maso" (Hedysarum alpinum), a species of wild licorice; the other favorites are roots of the yellow pond-lily, the pith of the flowering rush, the tart stems of the cow parsnip and wild rhubarb (Polygonum elliptica)."
(89:70)

"If the Indian runs out of food altogether . . . he will go out and scrape rocks, gathering a black cockled lichen of the genus Gyrophora; this cryptogam, when boiled, will provide a smooth and nourishing gelatine (*thé-tsin*, or rock tripe) to feed the children."
(14:XXVI)

11.2.3 Beverages

"Among the *Dènè*. . . tubes made of hollowed swan bones (*kuja; kuvuli; tsendhul*), are used by the men to drink more conveniently while traveling in a canoe; i.e. they can thus suck up water without having to go ashore.
(58:543)

11.2.4 Euphoriants

"Among tribes who have been taught to use metal, many stone objects are still in use, such as calumets. . ."
(58:530) (Pl. 7, No. 1, 1 bis, 2)

11.3 Cannibalism

". . . cannibalism took place among almost all tribes before their conversion. The pangs of hunger and inordinate fear of death drove those Indians to such a pitch of insanity that, far from thinking of setting out in

search of food, they threw themselves at one another and slew one another mercilessly. . . The Montagnais were less guilty of such excesses than the other tribes, because each family lives in isolation."
(14:XXI–XXII)

"The Montagnais nation is not and never was anthropophagous. . . however, there is hardly an old man around Great Bear Lake, Fort Good Hope and in the Rockies who has not. . . in time of famine. . . . eaten several members of his family. At Fort Norman I saw a white-haired old man who has eaten as many as eleven. . ., i.e. his two wives, and his six children, his father, his mother and a brother-in-law. Hardly three years ago (1864). . . an Indian of Fort Good Hope. . . ate his youngest daughter."
(59:530)

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

12. KINSHIP

12.1 Family

12.1.1 Marital Relationship

12.1.1.1 Choice of a mate

". . . they choose their wives only within their own tribe; they do not feel the slightest reluctance to form an alliance with a sister-in-law or a niece of theirs. On the contrary, they look upon a woman's kinship with their late spouse as a sufficient reason to remarry with her. However they have a deep aversion to unions between blood relations."
(14:XXXV)

"Usually, the woman was bartered by her father for a blanket, a gun or. . . a couple of dogs."
(14:XXIII)

12.1.1.2 Polygamy

"Bigamy, polygamy and even a state of relative communism were widespread among the *Dènè-dindjié*."
(14:XXII)

"Among the Mackenzie Indians. . . it is rare for a man to keep his first wife. . . he will change wives 3, 4, 5 or 6 times. . . before persevering in a last union. . . He will nonetheless continue to look upon all women with whom he has had sexual intercourse as a wife of his and will keep referring to her as such."
(253:2-3)

12.1.1.3 Division of work

"The wife. . . (must) attend to all housework, tan hides, dress furs, bone and smoke venison, grind bones to extract the marrow, and do the sewing, washing and mending."
(14:XXV)

12.1.1.4 Forms of dissociation

"If the woman is dissatisfied with her husband, she gets even by breaking faith with him (divorcing). The husband does likewise. . . but not without

first giving her a few blows with the butt of his gun or the flat side of his axe-head, in part settlement.
(59:528)

"When a husband had tired of his wife and rejected her, he took back any gifts he had made to her, but had no right to claim from the aggrieved father the return of whatever object had served to seal the bargain."
(14:XXIII)

12.1.2 Family behaviour

"The father's authority is not much greater. . . than that of the chief. It is hardly respected except through force."
(59:528)

". . . the child is a slave who must obey at all times, and obey everybody. . ."
(59:529)

"I was not unaware of the small amount of care bestowed by the Indians upon the orphans committed to their charge."
(111:377)

12.2 Kinship terminology

". . . if, within the tribe. . . a husband calls his wife *sé'a* (my slave), in other locations he refers to her as. . . *sé dézé* (my sister).
(14:XXII)

". . . they have no word in their vocabulary to designate male or female cousins, of whatever degree. These are all referred to as brothers or sisters. Also lacking in their vocabulary are specific words for brother and for sister in general; but they do have specific terms for special words to differentiate the elder or younger brothers. Orphans, the adoption of whom has developed into a custom, refer to their adoptive parents as father and mother. In the *dènè* tongue, the words for uncle and aunt derive from the words father and mother. They have no abstract term to designate parents in general; in such cases they use the word brother. They do have a word, however, to designate parents in the capacity of forebears or progenitors. The various forms of this word are *sé tchôǫ k'é, sè t'i kwi* or *sé téjyé k'é*, which mean respectively "my big ones", "my tall ones", "my higher ones".
(14:XXXV)

"1. all uncles are called "father", and all aunts "mother";
2. all grandsires and grandams, together with brothers and sisters thereof are called "grandfather" and "grandmother". Unrecognized

are such concepts as those of grand-uncle and grand-aunt, or those of great-grandfather, great-great-grandfather, etc.

3. vice-versa, there are no grand-nephews, but only grand-sons;
4. there is a distinct word for eldest brother, and one also for youngest brother, but none to express the word brother. Likewise for the word sister;
5. the names cousin (male or female) are expressed by the words brother and sister, without any particular designation.
6. one and the same word designates son-in-law and daughter-in-law. Similarly there is a single word to designate brother-in-law and sister-in-law, etc.

Among the Montagnais of all nations, there is complete identity in this respect, except in a few dialects."
(59:500-501)

13. COMMUNITY

13.1 Community structure

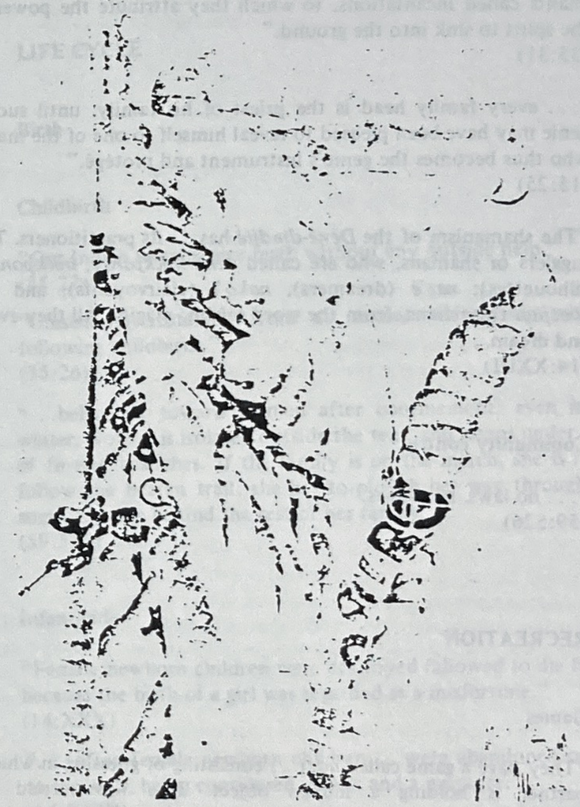
"The large Montagnais family is not constituted into a republic or in a number of small states; it is divided into tribes which are subdivided into various bands, each independent of all the others and recognizing no other master than the individual wishes of each member."
(59:526)

13.2 Chiefs

"While a few tribes have one or several chiefs, those chiefs wield but very little power and their title is largely honorary. Their functions consist in regulating hunting expeditions, discussing the advisability of trips to trading posts, parcelling out among younger members the goods obtained by trading. . . A chief is known by the length of his harangues.

Indians do not consider themselves as inferiors to their chiefs and yield to them in no respect whatever whereas the chiefs. . . in order to preserve their rank and popularity, shower largesse upon the young people whom they pompously call their retinue; *seskénéu*."
(59:526)

"The chiefs appointed by certain tribes, or rather chosen for them by the Hudson's Bay Company have absolutely no other function than that of organizing hunting and trading trips. . ."
(14:XXII)



11. Missionaires travelling on Great Slave Lake

13.3 Priests (jugglers)

"... those Indians recognize jugglers who assume the joint functions of conjurors, spell casters, physicians seers, thaumaturges, and finally absolvers. Men of this category are more despised than feared, because they are generally paranoiacs or half-crazy."
(15:25)

"... by way of priests they have jugglers that they call Clairvoyants (*Nako'i*) who hear confessions of sins, practise fasting and the singing of chants called incantations, to which they attribute the power of causing the spirit to sink into the ground."
(35:31)

"... every family head is the priest of his family, until such time as a genie may have been pleased to reveal himself to one of the man's children who thus becomes the genie's instrument and protégé."
(15:25)

"The shamanism of the *Dènè-dindjié* has... its practitioners. They are the jugglers or shamans, who are called *dènè inkkpanzè, inkkponé* (shadows, silhouettes); *nat'é* (dreamers), *nako'i* (clairvoyants); and in *dindjié, toezjien* (magicians, from the word *schian*: magic). All they ever do is sing and dream..."
(14:XXIII)

13.4 Community control

"... no laws, no judges."
(59:526)

14. RECREATION

14.1 Games

"They have a game called *udzi*... consisting of guessing in which hand the partner is holding a hidden object. This was carried on to the accompaniment of songs, outcries and drumbeats."
(14:XXX)

"The *Dènè-dindjié* would frequently wear masks... while playing games imitating the actions of giants called *otchapé, kfwi-dételli* (shaved heads), *dzé-tchpô* (great hearts) or *tchi-tchpô* (big heads)..."
(14:XXVI)

14.2 Songs

"Their songs, simply vocalized among the Montagnais, accompanied by words among the Hare and the Loucheux, are not devoid of harmony and of rhythm. They have a rhythm for love, another for war and magic, a third for games, a fourth for dancing and a fifth for mourning and sorrow... all those songs are in a minor key... As soon as we stop accompanying them, either vocally or with some instrument, they flatten all the notes..."
(14:XXVI)

15. LIFE CYCLE

15.1 Birth

15.1.1 Childbirth

"Our Indian women give birth without any outside help."
(35:27)

"(husbands) abstained from all sexual relationship with their wives following childbirth."
(35:26)

"...behaviour toward women after confinement: even in the dead of winter, woman is isolated outside the tent, and sleeps under a small shelter of fir-tree branches. If the family is on the march, she is not allowed to follow the beaten trail; she has to plough her way through the snow, at some distance behind the rest of her family."
(59:515)

15.1.2 Infanticide

"Female newborn children were destroyed (allowed to die from exposure) because the birth of a girl was regarded as a misfortune."
(14:XXX)

"... often female newborn children... were abandoned or left as a prey to the wolf, being considered useless and a nuisance."
(14:XXIII)

15.1.3 Infant feeding

"Mothers... breast-feed their children during three years or more."
(35:26)

15.1.4 **Naming**

"... instead of the sons taking the name of their parents, it is the father and the mother who, at the birth of their first son, assume the newborn's name. Thus, the father of *Ttchélé* is thenceforth known as *Ttchélé-t'a* (father of *Ttchélé*), and his mother as *Ttchélé-mon* (mother of *Ttchélé*)."
(14:XXX)

15.1.5 **Transporting babies**

"Our Indian women carry their babies on their backs."
(35:27)

15.1.6 **Bethrothal**

"... among certain small tribes along the Mackenzie, some children are betrothed at a very early age..."
(253:3)

15.2 **Adolescence**

15.2.1 **Menstruation**

"... during their menses, wives and daughters are segregated from all others... they are not allowed inside the family tent.. they are even excluded from the camp itself...; throughout the menstrual period, they live in a small hut made of branches, their head and chest covered with a large hood, so they cannot see any man or be seen by one. They must neither follow or cross any trails, nor ride in a pirogue, nor sit on the bed skins, nor use any cooking utensil; they are made to drink through a slender tube made of a swan bone. While in her menses, the woman is called *tei-ttini*, an ambiguous word which means: she who wears a hood, and also she who is in ailment. According to the Indians, the reason for this practice is that this condition in a woman can cause a man's death."
(35:26)

15.3 **Old age**

15.3.1 **Behaviour toward the aged**

"... not so long ago, an old woman in her eighties, and in her second childhood, was abandonned, during the summer, on a small island of

Great Slave Lake, with no other food than a single piece of dried meat."
(59:494)

"... the fate of the old people... ill treatment, harsh words, mockeries, deprival of food, wishes of death... If death tarries too long, or if the old person becomes crippled and disabled... he or she is abandoned on a campsite until death follows. At Good Hope, an old man was abandoned by his children... and a woman in her seventies by her only son. A small fire is built for him in the snow; a piece of smoked meat is left near him, under a shelter of branches, and the tribe moves on! As of that moment he is considered dead. As his relatives say: *Otcié élla-niwèt, yènta ahenttè khulu otcié ellaniwet*. – "He is indeed dead; he still looks alive, but in fact he is dead."
(59:528-529)

15.3.2 **Burial**

"As regards funeral customs, there are three methods of burial: the body is either stretched out, crouched up or stood up and placed in a pit, or in a casket of rough wood held up on stakes, on or in the ground, in tree trunks, planted in the ground, etc. Cremation is also practised, for the purpose, says Petitot, of providing comfortable warmth to the dead, whose body would otherwise shiver forevermore."
(Bordier: 61) (Pl. 13)

"... they would bury their dead as soon as death occurred... They would sew up the body in skins which they painted in red, then deposited it in its grave... entombed it upright in the hollowed trunk of a standing tree..."
(14:XXXIII)

"... the dead are removed to some secluded spot and deposited in a chest made of slender notched tree trunks, raised three to seven feet above the ground. The dead Indian's clothing, weapons and utensils are buried with him; his birch-bark canoe is laid upside down over his grave, or else allowed to be carried away downstream. All of his personal belongings that cannot be buried with him are destroyed. They are burned, thrown into the river, or hung up in the trees, for they are *eln'ari, étay*, i.e. anathema."
(14:XXVI)

"The *Dènè-dindjié*... bury their dead in chests (*tssa*) raised on piles driven into the ground. Since they embraced Christianity, they have turned to ground burial... surrounding the grave with coarse fencing or a staked enclosure."
(58:589)

"The *Dènè-dindjié* have never practised cremation or incineration as a national custom."
(58:602)

"They feel an extreme repugnance to handling dead bodies or bones of the dead, and they never use any object that has belonged to a dead person. As soon as anyone is in the throes of death, they hasten to put down the tent, to avoid death taking place in it, which would make it taboo."
(14:XXXV)

RELIGION AND WORLD OUTLOOK

16. RELIGIOUS LIFE

16.1 Religious beliefs

"The beliefs of the *Dènè-dindjié* are implicitly reflected in their traditions, their legends and their daily practices. They do not teach them professedly. Nor do they officially recognize their beliefs or their divinities."
(15:44-45)

16.1.1 Spirits and deities

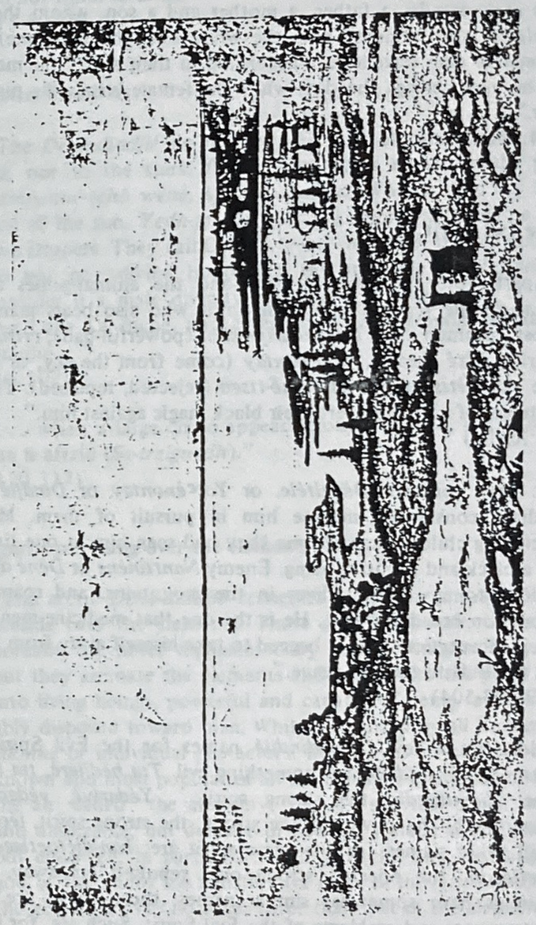
16.1.1.1 National god

"The moon, *tpèwè-zaë* or *adzié-di-sa*, the midnight sun, is for the *Dènè-dindjié* nation the real national and tutelary god, supremely recognized and worshiped."
(15:112-113)

"As a child, the moon-god is the provider of the *Dènè-dindjié*. He is called *Sié-zjit-dhidié, Sa-kkè-wéta Sa-wéta;* i.e. Sitting in the moon, sitting on the moon or He who lives in the moon. He is also called *Ettsen-noulé-yan*, the Little Beloved, *Bettsin-nni-ounli* and *Bettsen-nouli*, the Creator. . . Other names for him are *Etsièghè*, the Musk-ox-dung; *Nni ottsintâné*, Moss child; *Bètsouné-yénel chian*, Raised by his grandmother; *Oumit-chimo-awasis*, the Dung child, and finally *Attik-oumik iyiniw*, the Man of the reindeer excrement. As magician or protector of the *Dènè-dindjié*, the Moon-god bears the names of *Kotsi-da-tpèh* or *Oltsint-pédh*, the Operating stick, because he worked wonders with the aid of his wand; he is also named *Etsié*, the Grandfather, and *Etsiédéwkfoë*, the yellow Grandfather. . . . Finally, as genie or god of the moon, this divinity changes the preceding names into those of *Oboe-ékon* or Shield-belly, *Edzéè, Edzil'* or *Adzjell*, the Heart, and *Ettsonné, Ettsun, Ettséné*, the Evil spirit."
(15:116-119)

"The male lunar god is all the more the arctic *Dènè-dindjié's* national god for his being their maternal grandfather. Those Indians claim they issued from the marriage of a direct descendant of the first man and woman with a daughter of old man Moon, named *Yékkpay-ttsèghe* or daylight's wife."
(15:117)

". . . our *Dènè-dindjié* have a primordial knowledge of a good Being who is placed above all other beings. He has a multitude of names. The most usual one in the three main dialects is *Bèttsen-nu-unli* (he by whom the earth exists), *Nnutsé* (earth-maker or Creator) and *Tit'ié* (father of men). The Hareskin and the Loucheux consider him a triad made up of the



12. Great Bear Lake, Keith Bay (westshore). Fort Norman and Petitot Mission.

father, the mother and the son. The father is sitting at the zenith, the mother at the nadir, and the son travels up and down the sky from one to the other."
(14:XXIII)

"Frequently they personify their divine triad in the form of huge birds of the eagle family, a father, a mother and a son, whom they call *olbalé, orelpalé* (the immense one, the white one, the pure one), *nontèlé* and *Kanèdèté* (the traveller). . . according to their story, the male, on arriving at his nest, brings the day, while the female brings the night along with her."
(14:XXXI)

16.1.1.2 The Evil Spirit

"Apart from the creative triad and the animal-genies or *Elloné*, the *Dènè-dindjié* recognize an Evil Spirit who also bears many names. The most common ones are *yédariyé-slini* (powerful-bad); *éttsoné* (otter, evil spirit); *ëdzé* (heart); *yat'énontay* (come from the sky, or having crossed the sky); *éttséni* (spirit); *onné-ttsen* (rejected, repulsed). The Indians live in terror of him and exert their black magic against him."
14:XXIII)

". . . evil spirit or *Dèneltélè*, or *Yatᶜènontay* or *Dindjié ta"in*. . . The Indians constantly imagine him in pursuit of them. Many of them, including children assured me they had seen him at one time in the guise of a black and frightful being. Enemy *Nanttinène* or *Dènè djyèdè* does not belong to any nation, lives in the mountains, and roams through the woods in broad daylight. He is the one that medicine-men turn away by their incantations. He is begged to take himself away from the sick and to let the Indians hunt in peace."
(59:503-504)

"Here are a few *Dènè-dindjié* names for the Evil Spirit: *Ttasin-slini, ttasin-djiéré, djidzjin*, i.e. something evil. *Tta bédjiéré, tta beslini*, the evil one; *djen-tloedh*, the strong spirit. . . *Yédariyé, yédaodiyé, yéindji-dhaetloedh*, the powerful, the strong, the strong spirit, *iéeé* the evil one. Still other names for the same spirit are: *han-djétoetlaedh, hantpoetè-toetlaedh*, the rejected strong one, repulsed far away. Since certain animals have somewhat similar names, those beasts are considered as instruments and emblems of the Evil Spirit. Such are, for instance, *ttsen, ttséné, éttsali*, the yellow woodpecker (Picus varius) and *éttsun, éttson, ttsiw*, the otter. Yet *Ettséné* is not a tempter nor a torturer. . . . He is not a trine and is regarded as a pure spirit; i.e. he is disembodied. The Indians dread this demon mainly with regard to their breaches of the ancient customs of their forebears. But the sole punishment they have seemed to me to dread from *Ettséné* is death. The habitat of that evil Spirit is the

Moon. Finally the *Dènè-dindjié* give the evil spirit an even more mysterious and equivoqual name by calling him *Edzil', Edzéè, Edzon, Adzjiel'* i.e. the Heart of heaven or of nature. Under this designation he is still the genie of disease and of death, at the same time as a lunar divinity. However, I cannot asseverate that he is the same god as *Ettséné*; indeed I do not think so at all."
(15:82-85)

16.1.1.3 Astral divinities

"The *Dènè-dindjié* do not pay any kind of worship to the sun, *sa, cha, sié*, nor to the stars, *fwen; shen*. Their name for the planet Venus is *Ttsèyunnè-tchô wènè*, star of the Tall Woman, and for Syrius, *sa-linhé*, dog of the sun. *Yedh-ta*, the celestial virgins, is the name they give to the two Dippers. They call Orion's belt *Dénintchié*, the old man. . . While they do not pay divine honors to the sun, the *Dènè-dindjié* nevertheless consider it a male divinity among the *Tchippewyans* of Lake Athabasca and Lake La Biche, and a female divinity among the Hareskins and the *Dindjié*. . ."
(15:102)

". . . when a large circle appears around the sun, the Montagnais say the sun is afraid (*Sa-trelguedh*)."
(120:337)

16.1.1.4 Spirits presiding over the elements

"The arctic *Dènè-dindjié* recognize spirits or genies called *Schédim* who preside over the elements. Those gods of the air, of fire, of the aurora borealis, are never represented by definite images. They are truly spirits but they animate the elements and meteors to the point of turning them into living beings, powerful and capable of being favourably or unfavourably disposed toward man. While recognized by all Indians, they are never *éllonhé* or individual protectors, in the eyes of the *Dènè-dindjié*. The best known and most popular of all the *Schédim* is the god of the winds and of the air, called "the almighty." He is a spiritual being, therefore invisible and unseizable, but delicate of hearing, jealous and quick to take offence but endowed, in particular, with powerful and indefatigable lungs. The god of the winds has a distinctive name in the *Dènè-dindjié* theogony; but the god of fire has no other name than that of the element itself: *kpon;* he is, however, a beneficent god, extremely beloved by all who live in the coldest country on earth."
(15:76)

"*Idi* or *Iti*, the god of lightning, and in a wider sense, the god of thunder, is even more dreaded than *Ta-youkpay*, the polar fire. He is produced by a gigantic eagle. Each spring, with the return of warm weather, he promptly

shows up on the peaks of the Rockies where he nests, and comes down again to earth in the fall. *Idi* produces lightning by winking his eyelids, and thunder by the violent quaking of his wings and his tail."
(15:79)

16.1.1.5 **Legendary divinities**

"The most northerly *Dènè-dindjié* virtually recognize divine ommiscience in the names of a legendary hero variously called *El-naki, El-na-guhini, El-ta-oduhini, El-na-ta-ettini* or *nischié-gunihiw,* according to particular dialects, and meaning: He who sees backward and forward, He who has eyes in front and in the back. They visualize this god as being of gigantic stature, in whose comparison man is but a puny pigmy. They attribute to him the utmost benevolence, see him clad in dazzling finery and holding in his hands thunder and also a celt or stone axe with which he can split open the earth to release man held captive there by the Spirit of darkness."
(15:54-55)

"Wrapped up in the skin of the son (of fabulous birds, i.e. of white eagles), *Ra-tronné* or the Stranger, hero of the *Dènè*, crosses the Ocean and lands in America, avoiding the dark country of the Dog-Men, after two stopovers on islands of the Pacific."
(29:696)

16.1.1.6 **Goblins**

"Lastly the arctic *Dènè-dindjié* also have goblins, which they call *kfwi-tta*, meaning War feathers; of which they could not give me a description but which they recognize as being perfectly harmless.
(15:100)

16.1.2 **Eschatology**

16.1.2.1 **Immortality of the soul**

"The *Dènè-dindjié* believe in the immortality of the soul, in a second life, in a world above and a nether world."
(14:XXXI)

"Of the immortality of the soul, they have rudimentary knowledge; their separated souls are the *Eyounīnè* to some, and the *Ewiû-èn, Ttsini*, and *nikyon,* to others."
(59:505)

"The ghosts or *Eyunné* of our *Dènè* whistle like the *Innulit* of the Eskimos."
(13:XXXIII)

"Our *Dènè-dindjié* believe that souls depart in a boat. In fact a standard phrase to express a dying man's last moments is: *bé yu dék'i* (his spirit is leaving in a canoe)."
(58:601)

16.1.2.2 **Behaviour of departed souls**

"... some Indians believe the northern lights are the spirits of kinsmen performing celestial dances; and when they get too afraid of them, they dispel them or pretend to dispel them by shooting off guns in the air; on the other hand they imagine they can summon them by whistling; others pay no attention at all to them."
(120:338)

16.1.2.3 **Reincarnation of the soul**

"... a great many tribes, the pristine belief in metempsychosis and the transmigration of souls is profoundly rooted. Usually, it is babies who are born with one or two teeth who are considered as resuscitated or reincarnated. Likewise babies, born just after someone's death. I was unable to shake a young girl's belief that before she was born, she had lived in a body and with a name other than those under which I knew her; nor could I prevent an old woman from claiming as her own the child of her neighbour, under the specious pretext that she recognized in him the transmigrated soul of her own dead son."
(14:XXX)

"The fact that some children are born with two teeth is considered by northern Indians as a case of transmigration and reincarnation of the soul of the last person to die within the tribe."
(75:246)

"This faculty of reincanation, the *Dènè-dindjié* apply it also to animals. I have known an unfortunate mother who was heartbroken, because a professional witch assured her she had seen her dead son walking along the lake shore, in the shape of a bear. It is rare that after some notable Indian has died, companions of his do not come forward and declare that they have seen him, changed into a two-legged caribou, a bear or an elk."
(14:XXX)

16.1.3 Moral concepts

16.1.3.1 Evil

"... they know about snakes, including very big ones that they call *naduwi, natéwéri, klan,* and *it'ini*. In their minds, snakes are so identified with evil, disease and death that when they wish to describe a fit of shivering or an acute attack of some infectious or nervous disease, they use the phrase: *natéwédi yé nadenkkwè*, "the snake has got into him." They claim that in their incantations, their medicine men or seers would force these reptiles to leave the body of the sick who applied to them for help."
(14:XXXV)

"... they recognize sin of (which they equate essentially with sexual intercourse) as the prime source of all evils, and death as its punishment: this is what is expressed by the saying: *Etendi-koëdenyé*."
(35:31)

16.1.4 Sacred objects

"... as soon as they have gone through their initiation, the Indians secure a pelt or some organ of the animal to be used in making an amulet, a talisman. ... Bird claws, tails or wings; pelts of ermine weasel or skunk; birds stuffed or with outspread wings. These were worn on the person. They were also used to decorate pirogues, cradles and beds; spouses would sleep under the gaze of the tutelar animals that symbolize the devil, such as the wolverine, the otter and the fox. This amulet was planted on food caches, to the accompaniment of chants."
(15:8-9)

"... the feathers of the yellow woodpecker (Picus varius) and the pelt of the otter are powerful amulets."
(15:84)

16.2 Religious practices

16.2.1 Taboos

"When Indians while hunting have killed a large animal, such as an elk or a reindeer, they collect its blood in the animal's paunch and bury it under snow, far from the meat. When they kill a bird or a small animal, they bleed it at once."
(35:29)

"...before they were baptized, they considered it a fault to eat the flesh of a still-born animal or one found dead; in this fashion they differentiated between animals that they regarded as pure and edible, and unclean ones, such as ferocious beasts and carnivorous birds."
(35:30)

"...the Indian must avoid eating blood, shell-fish, fish spawn, still-born animals, intestines, lice and certain animals and birds...crows, dogs, or animals that have died from some disease."
(59:514-515)

16.2.2 Magic

16.2.2.1 Curative

"...*èlkkézin-tsédjen, ehkkèen-tsèt chin, nikkion-tsoetil'ié*, or healing magic, according to the different dialects or "the song of one upon the other", mutual song, also bears the strange and mysterious name of "underwater passage", *tpu-yié-tsédété*. In order to operate healing magic, the only one in which the *Dènè* shamans play the twin role of absolver and healer, the conjuror, sometimes accompanied by two fellow magicians, would shut himself up with the patient in a *chouns* or medicine-lodge and, it is said, abstained from all food during three days. He would lie down beside the patient and launch into chants, suspirations and insufflations that were said to be beneficial and capable of charming away the malady. He would thus very easily manage to put the patient to sleep through the soporific effect of this monotonous and unmelodious recitative.

Prior to this ritual, the conjuror would obtain from the patient a confession of his faults; because, claim the *Dènè*, it is the sins of men that draw upon them evils, diseases, and cause them to die: *étendi koédenyé*. It seems that this auricular confession was a genuine one on the part of the patient. On the part of the absolver, however, it was a rather odious procedure, for I have been told that conjurors were not content with a spontaneous avowal of the patient's transgressions and did not take the patient's word but attempted to take advantage of his ingenuousness by means of captious or useless questions, and make him confess to greater misdeeds than those he had committed. When the confession was over and the patient had been lulled to sleep by the chants, the magician would summon *You-hanzin*, "the Distant one", or *Nou-hansin* "He who is far from us", and call upon him to attend. The Hareskin call him *Younkfwin*, "Spirit of the North." Rushing up in response to the shaman's call, the Distant Spirit cast out the patient's sins, pulled out the disease or pain or malicious spirit that beset him, retrieved his soul which had hidden and was trying to leave his body and, reinstating it within its corruptible shell, restored life to the dying man, who was thus saved. But if the Distant

Spirit had too great a love for the dying person's soul, he would spirit it away and that was the end of it. The man would die. . . All this was a lucrative business, for it had to be paid for, and not at all cheaply."
(15:25-28)

16.2.2.2 **Inquisitive**

"Inquisitive magic, *nanlyéli, nanldé, yné-inkpa tsédékpa, yunkpat-adeytchit,* was the cast spell, the beneficial spell. Its purpose was to recover lost people or objects, to forecast the arrival of traders' boats, the outcome of hunting trips and travels, and to get information about the condition, dwelling or actions of absent people. The minister of this procedure was called *nàkohin,* the seer. . . For the purpose of knowing the future, the seer chants, blows, squirms and wriggles, quavers in nasal tones, and ends up by pretending to fall asleep. On his simulated awakening, he describes to his dupes the visions he has had in his pretended trance. He then makes a show of throwing up in the air a tiny ball, which he adroitly palms out of sight and has supposedly gone out to fetch news of the person, or information regarding the object about which he is being consulted. Finally, still chanting, he sees the ball suddenly reappear, bringing him the desired information."
(15:28-32)

16.2.2.3 **Harmless**

"In the harmless or fun magic, *yétitséwi,* jugglery, *yéïndji-djitpèzjit,* repetition of thought, the *Dènè-dindjié* seem to copy, by way of sport, the actions of one of their old-time heroes wielding a white stick or a slender branch of willow, and with horns tied to his forehead, the prestidigitator performs tricks or amusing stunts. He runs all over the camp wearing no other clothes than an animal skin; he wears a mask, or smears his face with vermilion, or with the juice of bilberry or of bearberry; his sole purpose is to arouse laughter, to play tricks on lookers-on, chasing after girls and boys, striking with his stick at those who are not quick enough to move out of range, and he himself scampers away amid the jeers and clamor of the crowd."
(15:32-35)

16.2.2.4 **Procurative**

"The Indian name for procurative magic is *inkkpanzé tta nattsoet,* "the strong shadow"; *ékhé ta-yétlin,* "the child (or young man) tied up in the air"; *akpey,* the child or the young man. Its purpose is to provide the shaman or his tribe with a large quantity of venison animals, either by attracting them to the territory, or by slaughtering them if they are already within range. The aim, therefore, is to put an end to or procure

abundance. . . this wonderful objective can be achieved only by the death of as many enemies as they need animals prepared to be slaughtered and eaten up. . .

Although the name and the description of this mode of jugglery refer to a young man, in practice the shaman makes use of a little child; in fact the words *sé-kwi, eskpé, ékhé,* and *akpey* mean child as well as boy and young man in the *dènè-dindjié* language. So, the shaman takes a little child, puts him in a hammock, ties him with eight strands around the head and a like number around the feet, then rocks him in the medicine-lodge to the chant of death to his enemies."
(15:35-38)

16.2.2.5 **Maleficent**

"Malefic or harmful magic, called *inkkpanzé dènè-kkèolté,* "the shadow that kills"; *èétlé,* "the dance"; *Ya-tpèh-nonttay* or *yitpoenétik,* "He who has crossed the sky in his flight, the fallen, the Devil. This type of magic is designed to visit death upon a personal enemy and is rooted in the shaman's own feeling of hatred or a family's desire for vengeance. Practitioners of this type of magic incur extreme disrepute and are held in fear as well as contempt. To play the devil, the *dènè* shaman removes all his clothes, smears his face with vermilion or red ochre, has someone paint red stripes all over his body, wears horns on his forehead, ties a wolf or wolverine tail below his back, and holds in his hands fringes of porcupine hair. Those fringes, *ékfwèli,* he alternatively rolls and unrolls them around his limbs. . . walks, shakes, quivers, and waddles along, in anger, *nànékel,* on his hands and feet, like an animal. In doing so, he imitates an animal as the best way to get close to the malicious-spirit. In this state, the shaman chants, calls, swears, howls. . . working himself increasingly into a frenzy and befuddling himself by dint of noise, contortions and howlings. He invokes *Ya-tpèh-nonttay,* calls on him to wing his way speedily from Great Trouts Lake, his customary abode, and penetrate into his body so that he may possess it and obey him by giving him all the means required to cause the death of his enemy."
(15:39-43)

16.2.3 **Ritual**

"When, in the winter, extreme cold plagues them and imperils their lives, the arctic *Dènè-dindjié* speak to the fire and say: *χuri, kpon nézin, χuri dinkpon, pélè-yékpo, patponnè wètlu.* "Quick, good fire, quick, perk up! Lo the wolf is approaching apace, and the traveller is numb with cold." This invocation has to be repeated until the fire blazes up."
(15:77)

16.2.4 **Devotion toward the Dead**

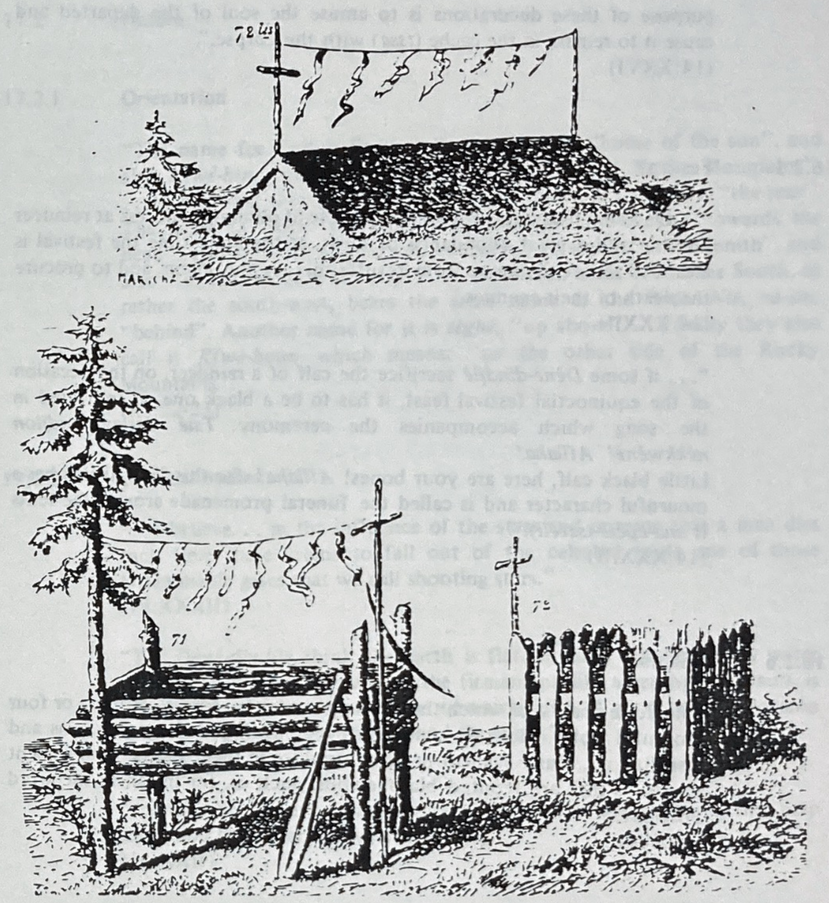
"When their parents die, the *Dènè-dindjié* express their mourning and their grief by cutting off their hair, rolling in the dust, tearing their garments and even shedding them altogether. At one time, on such occasions, they would make incisions in their own flesh and go about entirely naked."
(14:XXX-XXXI)

"The use of masks was frequent among the *Dènè-dindjié*; at funerals masks were used on the face of the dead."
(14:XXVI)

"Among certain tribes, one year after someone's death, all would gather around the hiding-place, and the grave was opened so that all may have a last look at the hideous and decomposed remains of the body; then, after laments and the singing of the hymn to the dead, the tribe would feast silently on the grass. I have witnessed this practice again at Great Bear Lake and among the Dogrib far removed from the trading posts."
(14:XXVI)

"Commemoration of the dead and feast of the souls. . . Our christian Indians now omit the first and the last act of that scene, i.e. 1. the visit and the stripping of the graves; 2. the procession of the bodies and translation of the relics. In the first case, a crowd of tribesmen would gather at the cemetery on the day appointed by the chiefs. This usually took place in the spring, i.e. after the souls had allegedly returned to the burial ground of their mortal remains. Sometimes, those ceremonies were held in the fall, i.e. before the periodic departure of souls with migrating game birds. At the cemetery, the graves were laid open and all present silently contemplated the macabre contents. Then, after the tribute of tears had been paid, the bones were carefully cleaned, stripped of any remnants of putrefied flesh, wrapped up in fresh skins, and then processionally paraded through the tents, where they were subsequently deposited in a place of honor, receiving each day the homage and offerings of the occupants. That religious ceremony was followed by panegyrics to the dead, the silent feast and the dance of the dead, during which a distribution of presents took place. Finally came the third part of the feast. The bones, reduced to a compact volume, were processionally transferred to a common grave, where they were covered first with branches and then with earth, but in such a way that the earth would not come in contact with the relics. However, the bodies of those who had been dead less than a year did not share these honors, undoubtedly because the condition of their corpse did not permit of this ritual."
(58:590-591)

"Above the graves of their dead, the *Dènè-dindjié* suspend long poles to which varicolored streamers of different colors are attached. The secret



13. *Dènè* graves

purpose of these decorations is to amuse the soul of the departed and cause it to remain in the cache (*tssa*) with the corpse."
(14:XXVI)

16.2.5 **Festivals**

". . .the moon festival is held for the purpose of obtaining success at reindeer hunting and a great abundance of meat; at the same time the festival is meant to relieve the moon from its sufferings, as they claim, and to procure the death of their enemies."
(14:XXXII)

". . . if some *Dènè-dindjié* sacrifice the calf of a reindeer, on the occasion of the equinoctial festival feast, it has to be a black one, as indicated in the song which accompanies the ceremony: *Tsié dètley endjion nékkwénè! Aïllaha!*
Little black calf, here are your bones! *Aïllaha!* for this festival also has a mournful character and is called the funeral promenade around the tents (*t'ana-épéié-tsatéli*)."
(14:XXXIII)

16.2.6 **Chants**

"Medicine chants, of which there is a great variety, consist of three or four mournful notes endlessly repeated, accompanied with contortions and insufflations. Many shaman healers introduce in their chants some ancient words. . . that are reputed blasphemous, such as, for instance, the word Sosᶜlouz."
(59:507)

17. WORLD OUTLOOK

17.1 Self-image

"The proper name of the Indians we are talking about here is man, which is translated without any indication of the number involved by the words *dènè, tènè, danè, dunè, dinè, adènè, adaena, dnaïnè, dindjié dindjitch,* according to tribes and dialects. Those words mean "what is earth, earthling, or terrestrial, from the particle *dè,* meaning "what is" and the radical *nnè, nni, noen, nan,* "earth."

17.2 Nature

17.2.1 Orientation

"The name for East is *Sa-yissi,* "sun-home" or "home of the sun", and also *Kfwè-hin,* "mountains-behind" or "behind the Rocky Mountains". . . .to the West they give the names *Tasin, tahan, tan, tien,* i.e. "the rear". The name of North or rather the north-east is *Thinsin,* "towards the head", also *Inkfwin, younkfwin, youthen,* "at large", "at the zenith", and also: "in the reindeer country", "in the barren lands." ". . . the South, or rather the south-west, bears the same name as the West: *Nié, na-sin,* "behind". Another name for it is *téghé,* "up above". . . Finally they also call it *Kfwè-houn* which means: "on the other side of the Rocky Mountains."
(87:22-23)

17.2.2 Celestial bodies

". . . believe. . . in the influence of the stars and imagine that a man dies each time there seems to fall out of the celestial vault one of those inflammable gases that we call shooting stars."
(14:XXXII)

"The *Dènè-dindjié* think the earth is flat, circular, surrounded by water and resting on that element. . . the firmament, like a hemispheric vault, is said to rest on the edges of the terrestrial disk. A prop called *ya-ottcha ni''ay* is said to support the sky and the earth."
(14:XXXII)

". . . their vocabulary includes the names of a few constellations that help them find their bearings when travelling."
(14:XXII)

". . . it was a little duck called *rankanli* who made the earth."
(105:370)

17.2.3 Atmospheric phenomena

"According to the *Dènè-dindjié*, lightning is produced by the flashing glitter in the eyes of a kind of monstrous eagle called *idi, iti,* whose flapping wings cause the rumbling of thunder."
(14:XXX)

"As for the celestial fire or polar light, the aurora borealis, those same *Dènè-dindjié* call it *éthen-kponé,* "reindeer-fire". They assume that the northern lights are made up of myriads of electric sparks escaping from

the fur of the celestial white reindeers, when these animals, pursued by spirits, rush and rub against one another as they head back towards some other point in space. But the *Dènè-dindjié* of the far north look upon northern lights as groups of celestial spirits, *ttsintèwi*, virtuous souls of their ancestors, performing up in the sky fantastic rounds and farandoles; or else manifestations of the presence of *Edzéè*, "Heart of the sky" or Genie of death. They claim that the aurora borealis scintillates vividly and unfolds across the sky in fast and sinuous movements, unbalances the head of lagging travellers and even strikes them down as would lightning. The *Dènè-dindjié* fear the aurora borealis and when, in travelling, they are surprised by one of those very vivacious displays of northern lights, they invoke the aurora and immediately make to it a confession of their faults in order, as they say, to abate the wrath of *Edzéè*, the avenging spirit. This has been an ancient custom among the *Dènè-dindjié*, and they observe it not only with regard to polar light, but in relation to any object that affects their mind of strikes terror into their imagination.
(15:77-78)

"... when there is an eclipse of the moon or of the sun... the *Dènè-dindjié* think that the celestial body is suffering and is on the verge of weakening in a confrontation with the Genie of death."
(29:692)

17.3 Numbers and measures

17.3.1 Numeration

"The hand is their standard of calculation, and shows the extent of its limitation. Once they have counted on the five fingers of one hand, they start again on the other, until they have covered the ten fingers."
(14:XXII)

17.3.2 Time

"Their measure of time does not exceed the lapse of one year. They recognize a great number of seasons, which they characterize by the different conditions of snow or soil, and they divide the year into twelve months or moons, each with a distinctive name. Several bear the names of animals, such as eagle, frog, goose, etc."
(14:XXII)

"The *Dènè-dindjié* count the days from sunset to sunset, for they say... that night preceded the day."
(14:XXII)

INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

18. INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

18.1 Dènè-dindjié Indians and Eskimos

18.1.1 Social

"The *Dènè* and the *Dindjié* have developed feelings of violent hatred and of even greater terror towards the Eskimo, who have massacred entire hamlets of these Indians. Accordingly, they apply to the Eskimo the injurious epithets of Enemy-feet *Ennak'è, anakpen* and Enemies of the open country: *Ot'el-nna.*"
(13:XI)

18.2 Dènè-dindjié Indians and Kolloches (Tlingit)

18.2.1 Social

"At that time, the enemies of the *Dènè* were the Kolloches, who live west of the Rocky Mountains. . . but today there is no trace of any dissension between red-skin nations."
(15:37)

"The *Dènè-dindjié* admit having had contacts with the *Khaguon* Kolloches in the respective roles of slaves and conquerors."
(58:603)

18.3 Dènè-dindjié Indians and Whites

18.3.1 Cultural

"Banlay (*Béla-nih-orlay*) "for him the earth is made", such is the name given to the French by the Montagnais. The names *Manannlay, Banè-gaunlay, Bètikorllay, Bètikollè* given to Frenchmen by the various Montagnais tribes all mean the same thing."
(59:493)

18.3.2 Social

"The Whites exert unlimited sway over our Indians; they can cross any part of the country in perfect safety; a mere gesture commands instant obedience. . . their wishes become law and any Indian considers himself

fortunate to have deserved the privilege of doing a white man's bidding."
(59:526-528)

"Most tribes are gentle and peace-loving; however there have been periods of internecine warfare, and few tribes, except the Loucheux, have not bloodied their hands in combats even with white people."
(59:496)

"The *Dindjié* and *Dènè* have learned from white people how to build shacks, play the fiddle, wear black frock-coats or tartan shawls."
(4:V)

18.3.3 Economic

". . . they trade in furs and dry provisions to supply the trading posts that the Hudson's Bay Company established a long time ago among them."
(11:107)

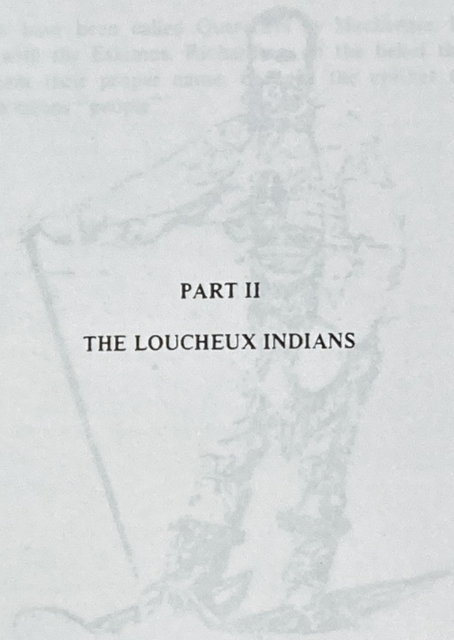
"Fur trading requires of the *Dènè-dindjié* that they make frequent trips to the trading posts. They go to them in small groups at different times of the year, but attend in crowds only in the spring and fall, to coincide with the arrival or departure of the barges or boats of the Hudson's Bay Company. On both those occasions, all the least distant tribes gather around their respective forts, where they arrive in flotillas of pirogues (*ttsi, ella, ttsi*), or on rafts (*χédhi, χéni, χaon*). At other times of the year, the Indians come on foot. The tracks made in the snow by their long snowshoes constitute those long and winding trails (*t'unlu, t'inlu, ghè*) that meander through the woods."
(14:XXVI)

"The smoked meat. . . is tied up in bundles of "cinq pelus" (five skins) and bartered, in the forts of the Hundson's Bay Company for hunting ammunition and for tobacco. The tongue, the fat and sinews of animals killed in the hunt are mediums of exchange."
(14:XXVI)

"*Pelu* is the name give to a beaver pelt. It is the country's standard medium of exchange, whose value is 2 shillings (2 1/2 francs). A skinned beaver is called "pelu-en-viande" (pelu-in-meat), valued at half of the other one which is called "pelu-en-poil" (haired pelu)."
(14:XXVI)

PART II

THE LOUCHEUX INDIANS



14. Emile Petitot in Loucheux costume

INTRODUCTION

"... a small tribe of the Loucheux, known as the *Idha-Kuttchin*, "the mountain dwellers", were nearly all cross-eyed. French-Canadians have applied the name to the entire Loucheux nation."
(74:835)

"The Loucheux have been called Quarellers by Mackenzie, because of their wrangles with the Eskimos. Richardson, in the belief that he was applying to them their proper name, changed the epithet to that of *Kuttchin*, which means "people".
(74:836)

1. GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

1.1 Territory

For the various names and habitats of the Loucheux bands, please refer to Section 1.1 (Territory) in Part I of this volume.

> "... some Loucheux of the *Kwitcha-Kuttchin* tribe (people of the heath-lands) or *Kodhéll-ven-Kuttchin* (people on the edge of the steppes) whose territory extends to the north-west of Eskimos fort, between the river *Syo-tchro-gunli-nillen*, the Arctic Ocean and the Mackenzie River. It is an area of sparse woods, dwarf fir-trees never more than fifteen feet in height and dotted with clumps of willow trees (*kokray*), marshes (*nita*) and of heath (*kwitcha*). This bleak plateau is called the floor (*Ontᶜ-yè-nendjigae*)."
> (126:186)

> "... those *Dindjié Van-ta-Kuttchin*... known to the other small tribes of the same language as the *Tdha-Kuttchin*, "mountain people", *Nattsu-Kuttchin*, "farthermost people", the *Klô-ven-Kuttchin* or people at the edge of the grassy plateaus; and finally as the *Dakkadh* or "squinters". These Indians are the ones Sir John Franklin referred to as the *Deguthee-Dennee*."
> (5:275)

> "... the people of the back country, i.e., who live inside the forests, *Tpè-ttchié dhidié* (people living far from the water). Richardson mistranslated that name as: "people sitting in the water." They are also known as the marmot people, *Neyttsè-Kuttchin*."
> (5:301)

> "... the *Intsi-dindjich* or "iron people", who hunt at the junction of Reindeer River. The *Tsoes-tsiég*, "fish beaters", also called *L'én-tsell*, "the Small-dogs."
> (5:311)

> "... from Fort Yukon... there came some *Dindjié* of the *Rhâne-Kuttchin* tribe or "river people". Accompanying the barge was a "bédare" or skin boat manned by *Kuttchin* Indians or "muskrat people". They hunt in the vicinity of Bell River or Rat River."
> (5:276)

> "... camp of 150 *Dindjié* in the steppes along the coast of the Arctic Sea... in November 1865. They were spread between Anderson River and the great Eskimo lake (*Sitidji-vann*)."
> (5:177)

"... they generally occupy the delta formed by the Courier River (rivière du Courrier) and Porcupine River."
(5:287)

"The Loucheux *Nakotcho-ondjigoe-Kuttchin* hunt as far as the shores of Lake *Sitidjé-van*..."
(159:294)

1.2 Territorial limits

"Beyond Grouse Lake (lac des Gélinottes) we entered *dindjié* country."
(5:168)

"... the junction of the *L'é-ota-la-délin* River: limit between the *dindjié* country and Hareskin territory.
(4:224)

1.3 Inhabited sites

"... Point Separation, summer fishing-camp of the *Dindjié*."
(4:213)

"... Loucheux... gathered at the mouth of the *Tsikka-tchig* River, one of the northernmost tributaries of the Mackenzie River or *Nakotsian-Kotcho* the Loucheux name for which is *Nakotcho-ontchig*."
(145:66)

"At *Tsi-kka-tchig*, we found most of the *Dindjié*."
(4:214)

"... I reached Middle Lake (lac du Milieu) on the shores of which there was a third *dindjié* camp. It was made up of five families."
(5:186)

'... we were going to camp with *Dzjen*, the Muskrat, in the vicinity of Middle Lake (*Ekkidatpag tchion*)... That camp was composed of only four huts... they belong to the *Nattséïn-kpet* camp, or camp of the Black, the camp of the Men from the Left."
(5:181)

'... at Lake *Voecha-édhéhen*... I saw two tents and three families in this last camp... whose inhabitants were *Ki-Yin, Sida-Jen, Van-lin, Schi-tey, Vi-taedh, Voe-lun*, etc.
(5:191-192)

1.4 Forts visited by the Loucheux

1.4.1 Fort Good Hope

"... on the Mackenzie River... the site of old Fort Good Hope. It was washed away by a flood in 1836, and rebuilt on its present site.
(4:121)

"...before the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company... the *Dindjié*... used to get their supplies at Fort Good Hope, at that time the northernmost fort in America..."
(4:197)

"... at one time, the Loucheux patronized Fort Good Hope, which, for that reason, is known in the Mackenzie area solely as the Loucheux's fort. At the present time, they have retired northward and take their furs to Fort MacPherson."
(74:835-836)

1.4.2 Fort MacPherson

"... (When Fort Anderson was abandoned in 1866) the Anderson *Dindjié* went up to Fort MacPherson, on Peel River."
(5:253)

"... because of the scarcity of reindeers, the *Dindjié* of the lower Mackenzie came to hunt at the source of the waters... of Manuel Lake (lac à Manuel). Their camp was composed of 14 huts... There had been two deaths in their camp. They had had ample cause to complain against the new clerk at Fort MacPherson, who last fall (1877) had sent them away without providing them with allowances for the winter... Accordingly, they were definitely resolved to patronize and to supply Fort Good Hope, as in the good old days, and never to set foot again at Fort Eskimo."
(83:370-371)

1.4.3 Fort Lapierre's House

"At the Fort Lapierre trading post there are no more than about ten families which, in the wintertime scatter in the valleys and, in the summertime, subsist on fishing along the *Tchi-ven-tchig* or the Porcupine River. I say only about thirty men; and yet the entire tribe was there. Those *Dindjié* are of the *Tdha-Kuttchin* tribe."
(170:167)

1.4.4 **Fort Yukon of the Ramparts**

"At Fort Yukon of the Ramparts I saw about one hundred and fifty men from the three tribes: *Kwitcha-Kuttchin* (giant people), *Tchan-djoeri-Kuttchin* (marmot people) and *Dzjèn-la-Kuttchin* (muskrat people)."
(170:173)

2. PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

2.1 Anthroposcopic description

"The *dindjié* people represents. . . a great mixture of races. Three or four main types are noted:

1. a round, wide, sallow face, with small and sharply slanting eyes, a rudimentary nose, and very thick lips;
2. black eyes, almost black complexion, nostrils sharply upturned;
3. aquiline and flattened nose, bulging forehead;
4. a floury white type."
(56:565)

"The *Dindjié* of Peel River, of the Mackenzie and of Anderson River. . . have, as general characteristics, a flattened occiput. . . a brachycephalic skull, a long and prognathous face, a big, undershot chin, a wide and fleshy mouth, a nose whose septum has been perforated, large dark eyes. . . close to the root of the nose."
(5:275-276)

"The *Dindjié* Loucheux has an elongated head, the occiput naturally flat, without any deformation, a prognathous jaw, an aquiline nose. . ."
(Bordier:61)

"The *Dindjié's* cranial characteristics are fairly general. They are: a wide skull, oblong and elongated from front to back, a naturally flat occiput without any artificial deformation. The forehead is straight and bulging, the face generally long, the lower jaw inordinately long."
(56:565)

"The *Dindjié's* legs are shapely but half-bent forward."
(56:565)

"Their women are very handsome and much whiter than the men. There is. . . among them an element of flat, floury, whiteness."
(11:14)

3. DEMOGRAPHY

3.1 Composition of the population

"There are about 400 of them in the Mackenzie area, but they number about 4000 in the Alaska territory."
(72:835)

"If we ascribe to each of the three American forts now established along the Yukon River and to the English fort a population of about 600, we get a total of 3,000 souls in the *Dindjié* nation on the west slope of the Rocky Mountains. I believe this figure in excess of reality."
(168:174)

"In Alaska, there are no more than 2,000 *Dindjié* people."
(5:311)

". . . the Loucheux population of the two Yukon forts does not exceed 1,000 souls."
(168:174)

"Fort MacPherson (Peel River), 1866, including Lapierre's House: *Dindjié* 290 people."
(70:653)

"On June 11, 1877, at Fort MacPherson, the Loucheux numbered one hundred and fifty to two hundred."
(4:295)

"The small fort called Lapierre's House was being supplied by thirty *Dindjié* Indians (June 1870) of the *Van-ta-Kuttchin* tribe i.e. "Lakes People"."
(5:271)

3.2 Diseases and physical handicaps

"(in 1867-1868) the typhus or a nervous fever decimated the Loucheux."
(138:296)

". . . strabismus seems to be the congenital physical defect of the *Dindjié*. It was among those Indians that I saw the first Redskins who were hump-backed, misshapen or with tooth trouble."
(5:180)

". . . the number of stammerers among the *Dindjié*: 5 stammerers out of 150 people."
(3:289)

4. LINGUISTICS

For information regarding Petitot's contribution to the Loucheux linguistics, the reader is referred to the chapter on *Dènè-dindjié* linguistics in Part I of this volume.

4.1 Vernacular

"The Loucheux pidgin, used in the Yukon and among the *Dindjié* of Peel River, is made up of scraps of French, English, *Tchippewyan*, Slave, *Dindjié* and even Cree vocabularies. It is not used in the Mackenzie, where Slave vernacular predominates. The latter comprises only French, Cree and *Dènè* Slave elements."
(5:292-293)

MATERIAL CULTURE

15. *Dindjié* camp near *Edzji-nétlyé* Lake

5. WEAPONS

5.1 Raw material

"And now I must tell about the locations where the Loucheux get the material they use in making their weapons. The kersantite and the orthoclastic feldspar out of which they made their arrowheads, are cobblestones picked up on banks of their rivers and the beaches of inland lakes. Pebbles of crystalline rocks are found there in prodigious quantities. Some of them are two to three feet in diameter. Piles of them rise to great heights at the tip of headlands, islands and islets. Huge quantities of them also occur on the alluvial strands bordering the Mackenzie River. Two leagues this side of Fort Good Hope, and also at the place called Mackenzie Strait, there are phonolite steeprocks that look like natural ramparts.
(48:402-403)

5.2 Hand Weapons

". . . they made use of crescent-shaped stone knives."
(30:688)

"The *Dindjié* have a knife of traditional shape, the *chsi*."
(56:564)

6. TRANSPORTATION

6.1 Navigation

"They make themselves boats covered with reindeer hides, but they have no canoes because of the total lack of birch trees in the mountains. As a substitute they use *cawn*, triangular rafts the tops of which are provided with a kind of flooring surrounded by a rough guard-rail."
(168:167)

"Their rafts, (*phaôn*), which means "drifting" (from *phâne*, river), are made of whole trees laced next to one another with strips of willow, in such a way that all the three tops are joined at one end and all the trunks at the other. This forms large isosceles triangles whose bases, much heavier than the apex, always float forward downstream. This type of construction prevents the *phaôns* from spinning or from grounding on the shallows. Across this first layer, the *Dindjié* put a few trimmed trunks acting as a stringer and on which they lay a second layer identical to the first, but surrounded by a rough guard-rail. Two big oars, roughly adzed, propel the

heavy machine forward whenever the current lags. Some of the Loucheux build themselves some tiny high-floating *rhâons*, on which they sit."
(5:286-287)

7. HOUSING

7.1 Framework

"The *dindjié* tents, *nivia*, are hemispheric, roomy, closed by a suspended door-curtain and made of two layers of reindeer hide, hair inside, which make them much warmer than *déné* lodges. Their shape is that of an outdoor oven. The hearth is made of a pile of limestones that rises above the lodge's floor of trampled earth. The floor, besides the inevitable fir-tree branches, is covered with haired reindeer hides, carefully laid out and neatly kept."
(5:181)

"Their lodges are small brushwood huts, in some cases covered with reindeer hides or goat-skins, which are less than four feet high and six feet in diameter."
(168:167)

"Nothing can be so squalid as the summer huts of those Indians. To make one they bend towards the ground the branches of a willow-tree, and on that support they throw a moose hide or a few reindeer skins sewn together, and scatter a few green boughs under this shelter. . ."
(5:288)

7.2 Fuel

"The most unusual fish in the Porcupine River is the candlefish; it is so oily that the Loucheux use it as a torch, lighting it at the end and letting it burn to the other."
(168:171)

"Both in the tundra (*kwitcha*) and the reindeer grazing grounds (*kodhell*), the sole resource of the *Dindjié* is a small, evergreen creeping heather, that grows profusely. . . It has the singular property of burning while still green, or even heavy with moisture. It is the Andromeda tetragona, that the Loucheux call *Shinoetlya*. . . a word which describes the overlapping and braided-like appearance of a quadrangular cord."
(5:179)

8. CLOTHING

8.1 Body

8.1.1 Head

"Their tunics have no hood, the Loucheux' only headgear being a wide band of blue and white beadwork, extending from ear to ear and with little strips of it floating down over the shoulders. Today only the chiefs are privileged to wear that diadem."
(59:532)

8.1.2 Shoulders

"Their summer clothing is of reindeer skins, their winter garments of white hareskins. Their chlamys (mantle), which extends to below the knee, has a tail-like netherpiece both in front and in the back; it is completed by a wide cape and is the same for men and for women."
(11:14)

"The *Dindjié* and the *Danè-Ingalit* are the northernmost *tchippewa-wéyan* tribes, i.e. with mantles of pointed skins or with swallow-tail clothes fore and aft. This costume, which at one time was worn by all *Dènè-dindjié* Indians, has practically disappeared to-day. It has been replaced first by the hunting tunic of smoked hide, short, round cut a little lower than the belt, and later by the European coat or jacket."
(5:310)

"I did not see a single Loucheux from Fort Yukon of the Ramparts who had preserved the old-time Loucheux costume: leather tunics with fringed tailpieces and trousers sewn to the footgear and decorated, like the tunic, with porcupine quill embroidery, beadwork and gashed leather fringe."
(170:173)

"They wear clothes of reindeer skin, hair inside and outside. The clothes consist of a jerkin or tunic, *ézjég-hik*, whose flaps, broadly notched over the hips taper sharply in front and in the back. The women's garment is like the men's, but longer and with rounded apron-pieces."
(59:532)

8.1.3 Hips

"The Loucheux wear, in addition to the tunic, trousers made of the same material, that are richly decorated, and sewn to the footwear. This garment is worn by both men and women."
(14:XXIV)

8.1.4 **The foot**

"Their foot covering is an integral part of the trousers, which is also worn by the women."
(11:14)

8.2 **Ornaments**

"The inevitable accessories to that costume are the wampum beads or shells *etsuzi, etsay, nakay,* the most appreciated of which are the big blue beads produced in Russian factories, and the long white shells that come from the Pacific. Those beads are worn as necklaces, as bracelets, or as fringe on the edge of garments. They are also worn all along the legs down to the instep. Those Indians also wear hanging from their neck a slender and longish whetstone of serpentine or amphibole, which they use to hone the large dagger (*chi*) held beneath their belt. Wampum beads and shells are the Loucheux's greatest wealth; they are immensely prized by their owners who take pride in accumulating large quantities of them which they then bequeath to their children. A complete Loucheux costume decorated with its *nakay* costs 40 to 60 "pelus" (pelts), i.e. 80 to 120 francs."
(59:532-533)

8.3 **Inside the house**

"As soon as they enter into their lodge, the *Dindjié* take off their traveling costume. . . and put on indoor garments, more ordinary or longer worn."
(5:181)

". . . they abhor nudity."
(11:14)

8.4 **Home craft and Maintenance**

". . . they make thread out of willow bark. That tree must be the Salix speciosa. The *Dindjié* call it *énéttchidi*."
(89:70)

9. ADORNMENT

9.1 **Ornaments**

9.1.1 **Nose**

"The Loucheux perforate their nasal septum from which they hang ornaments."
(13:XXVIII)

"Nearly all of them had a perforated septum hanging down over their mouth. . . but without the swan-bone ornament that, in the old days, they used to wear as a nose pendant."
(5:276-277)

9.1.2 **Hair**

". . . I did not see a single man who had preserved the old-time fashion of wearing his hair hanging in the back, gathered there in a big bun through which three eagle feathers were skewered."
(5:189)

". . . likewise no longer to be seen among the Loucheux at Fort Yukon of the Ramparts. . . are the long locks of hair that used to fall over their shoulders and stuck with three eagle feathers, or the decorative headband of white Dentalium shells."
(170:173)

". . . they rub into their hair a mixture of clay, animal fat and the down of duck or swan."
(14:XXX)

10. METHODS OF LIVELIHOOD

10.1 **Annual cycle**

"The *Rhâne-Kuttchin,* after hunting the argali and the bighorn on the *Tdha-tséïn* or Rockies, come down to the banks of the *Tsé-ondjig* after the break-up, build rafts which they load with furs and provisions, and float down that river up to Fort Yukon, with their families. Once they have finished their trading, they cross over to the right bank, where they leave their heavy and unwieldy craft, and go out to pass the summer on the ridges of the *Tdha-tcha* whence they repair to the *Tdha-tséïn* come snow time."
(5:286)

10.2 **Hunting**

"Hunting technique: Traveling on the lake, I saw some *shils* or hunting palisades enclosing a vast area of tundra and of woods, stretching to the end of the lake. That fencing is made of dead trees, roughly tangled up; at intervals along the fencing, there are openings or doors across which thongs or laces of catgut are woven. The reindeer are driven towards the pound; forced to get in; forced to seek an escape by way of the webbed openings where they get tangled up and strangled by the lacing."
(5:192)

10.3 **Fishing**

"After the barren-ground reindeer, the chief article of diet of those Indians is the Coregonus or whitefish."
(5:180)

11. FOOD SUPPLY

11.1 **Preservation**

11.1.1 **Preservation containers**

". . . they have preserved the memory of aerial houses built on poles. Right next to their lodges, there are tiny sharp-gabled houses, perched on poles twelve to fifteen feet high. These are no longer, or hardly ever, lived in. They are used merely as store-houses for their stores of smoked venison, dried fish, and pelts. . . they climb up to them by means of a cleated board. They like to nap in them on occasion or to sleep in them on hot summer nights."
(58:547)

11.2 **Foodstuffs**

11.2.1 **Fish**

". . . the *Dindjié* eat of a certain red and oily fish that they call *dhikki*. They eat it raw.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

12. FAMILY

12.1 Marital relationship

12.1.1 Choice of a mate

". . . a division of the *dindjié* nation into three camps, independent of the nobility or *tchill-hè*. Those camps are the *Etchian-Kpét*, i.e. "people of the Right", or Whites; the *Natséïnkpét* or "people of the Left", or Blacks; the *Trendjidheyttsetpkét* or "people of the Middle", i.e. the Browns. It is strictly forbidden to any *Dindjié*, man or woman to seek a marriage partner in the camp to which he or she belongs through his or her mother. The mate has to be chosen in one of the other camps. By right, the children all belong to the mother's camp. When I left the Mackenzie in 1878, not even one *Nattseïn* was left. The *Dindjié* were all considered Whites or Browns."
(5:311-312)

12.1.2 Polygamy

". . . they have no scruples at all about polygamy."
(11:14)

12.1.3 Forms of dissociation

". . . they have no scruples at all. . . about divorce."
(11:14)

12.2 Family behaviour

12.2.1 Between husband and wife

". . . they are good to their wives, whose advice they often heed to the point of looking upon them as chiefs."
(11:14)

"A Loucheux woman, beaten by her husband, avenged herself by breaking her child's head against a rock."
(59:529)

12.3 Terminology

". . . in the *Kouchâ-Kouttchin* dialect of Alaska, and among the *Dindjié* on the lower Mackenzie, parents call any male child of theirs "my man" (*soe dindjié*); and when they say: "so and so's man", it means "so and so's son."
(15:96)

13. COMMUNITY

13.1 Community structure

". . . on their territory, the Loucheux were scattered in bands of five or six families living together in spherical tents made of reindeer skins."
(126:186)

13.2 Chiefs

"The word chief, *pakpè*, in the *dindjié* dialect of the lower Mackenzie, becomes *kakpey* in the Yukon dialect."
(5:293)

"Husbands are good to their wives, whose advice they often heed to the point of looking upon them as chiefs: *Rakrey*, *Toyon*."
(11:14)

". . . the *Dindjié* of the *Van-ta-Kuttchin* tribe have as chief Hareskin Hood, *Khé-dhow-tsé*."
(5:274)

13.3 Priests (jugglers)

"Among the *Dindjié*, the conjuror's science is called magic (*schian*). . . and their charmers are known as *tazjian*, magicians."
(15:27)

13.4 Community control

". . . among them there are no such things as laws, or punishments, or rewards."
(11:14)

16. Volcanic cañon of *Tsè-Ondjig* River, eastern branch of the Yukon River

13.5 **Strife**

"In a lodge where, on either side, feelings had been running high, a Catholic Loucheux sprang to his feet and said: "Well, my brethren, since we cannot get along, let's agree on this: that those among us who will have prayed longest and with most fervour will thereby have proved that theirs is the better religion." Catholics and Protestants concurred in that singular proposal. It is said that the Protestants' catalogue of orisons was very soon exhausted and they were first to give up; as for the Catholic Loucheux, on the contrary, they went on for a half day saying their beads. After which they stood up and exclaimed triumphantly: "You have just proved that your religion is no good. . . The Protestants admitted their defeat. . . and stopped praying altogether."
(166:160-161)

"Another time. . . the Protestant Loucheux managed to silence the Catholics. "Don't you think," a Catholic was saying to the Protestants he wanted to convert, "don't you think the clerk's wife at Fort Good Hope, who is Catholic, is much smarter than the Protestant squaw wife of the clerk at Fort MacPherson? The squaw is "in the dark" (is ignorant) while the other woman "converses with books and blackens paper" (can read and write)? " "Well," replied one of the Protestant Indians, "it's not surprising, it's because she has a clock in her house, whereas the squaw has none! " And so the converter remained silent and nonplussed at a repartee that he considered very weighty and had not expected."
(166:161)

14. **RECREATION**

14.1 **Games**

". . . the Loucheux (play) football. . ."
(166:159)

14.2 **Songs**

". . . the *Dindjié* have the reputation of being the best singers among the *Dènè-dindjié*."
(5:189)

15. **LIFE CYCLE**

15.1 **Birth**

17. *Sa-viah*, (the Sunbeam), chief of the *Dindjié Kuchâ-Kuttchin*

15.1.1 **Naming**

"At the birth of their first child, the parents discard their own name and take on the child's name. They are then known as the father and mother of so and so. For instance to *Kayadè* is born a son who is given the name of *Etchèlè*; the father will then be known as *Tchèlè-wètᶜa*, and the mother as *Tchèlè-mon*."
(59:502)

15.1.2 **Circumcision**

"Some *Dindjié* have assured me that an adult who has not been circumcised after his birth should perform the operation on himself without anyone's help."
(5:311)

"... when a child had been circumcised, a little bit of blood was taken from him by pricking with an awl the palm of his hands and the soles of his feet."
(14:XXXVI)

"... male children were circumcised a few days after their birth, with a piece of silex stone. The circumcision wound was healed with a mixture of fat and pulverized compact pyrite."
(14:XXXVI)

"... circumcision is an established custom; it is practised by nearly all tribes, but not necessarily in all families and in the case of all individuals. Until these latter years, there have been uncircumcised people."
(58:566)

15.1.3 **Transport**

"... they use a chair-like saddle in which the child is literally sitting, with both legs hanging close together in front. A *Dindjié* mother therefore has to carry her child with his back leaning against hers..."
(58:590)

15.2 **Old Age**

15.2.1 **Behaviour toward the aged**

"I spent the night in the lodge of a young man... who had just lost his two children and he was as light-hearted as ever. Nearby, his old father lay

dying and the son appeared utterly unconcerned. All through the night, a bitterly cold one, the old man kept moaning, and clamouring for some fire... The insentive young man did not budge from under his bed covering..."
(126:281)

15.2.2 Burial

"... the *Dindjié* of the Lower Yukon buried their dead in a crouching, huddled position, in chests raised three feet above the ground on four stakes."
(58:589)

RELIGION AND WORLD OUTLOOK

16. RELIGIOUS LIFE

16.1 Religious beliefs

16.1.1 Mythology

1° Yékk ay-tt siègoe

Ttɒotchédi inttchogotɒet ñitchɒa-kɒet ñiɒa kkwitanttchin, voetchɒa ttchiéd étan dhenlloe tsékujin. Zjé kozjié dhédjuw, shoel'étan, tchijié; nizjigo kkié dhelisen.

Voe iyondé yétiiñanshen ttogoɒall, t ʂoedhiltchiyu, tɒadh, akɒonté yaño:

– ʂoe tchɒa, djien kkié zjit ʂoeyké kkatankɒay, yaño. Tɒadh gwoɒat, kiyondé tthey shoel' étan dhatchié. Voe tchɒa:

– Elloekɒwa, ʂiyondé, ño, akɒonté tétɒill'à kɒwa, yénishen, tiño.

– Ah! ʂoe tchɒa, ñi kkié zjionhon tinttcho; eygwoɒat ʂoe djinño. Djien ʂoeyké kkatankay ll'édji, èlloe ʂoeta kwotɒantsia lanval'i, yaño viyondé.

Akɒonlloe: voe tchɒa toe al'tɒen tédhitɒin tiyondé étchatschik kuyu, y'azjoegoe yɛ̀ɒa éñantchi yu, voe iyondé ninidhet.

Akɒon voe hen ttchey, voe tɒié tchɒan zjanat ʂé; titchɒa ttchied-étan, ey tthey at ʂé, nédheɒa yu, voezjé ttschien ttset tchidhankiek yu etɒandjia. Voe tazjiékɒet yinkɒa kinidhen, kukkan chwon; élloe voekonlli.

Akɒontté; voeklen, voehen tchɒantchɒat ninégweltpinn ttsiñen egwahen. ñittschié tinttcho, dindjié yendjitankloedh, akɒon andjow titizjiek, athen koïnkɒag yénidhen, athen dhellɒen tinétizjik. Nizjigo ékɒonté voe nindjitchétoezjek:

– ʂi yondé inl'ag niñidhet, akɒon inl'ag étɒilldji. Té tinétanzjik lanval'i? yénijit.

Akɒonlloe nazjié-ɒatchozjié yu, van tchɒô ven ttadjen at ʂé kuñantthek. Ttadjen tchion kkaon nedjitivik.

– Dji ttadjen djaɒadé atʂé? yénishen. Athen ɒahan tinttcho lanval'i. Athen ttschié nadjet gwoɒall ézel', yoe yénijit gwoɒat, énizjaké kkɒagoe kakédhéɒal. Athen natɒaho voenelhia, kukkiet tchidhankiek, van tchɒô vén ninizjié. Van nitschié, voe kkɒag kkandoettell konllen kiyonhva.

Dindjié nétoetènanhey, ñen kunkɒag nétoetènanhey; akɒon tɒékloedé édjittchi kwajen titchi kkitinttcho ɒaïnhey voenelhia.

– Tchidi tinttcho billi? yénijit gwoɒall, nétoetènanhey yu yoekkéñatɒié.

Akɒon nizjit kɒwa kotlen tchizjié titchi égudéttchin, dindjié tchɒô tchien zjègoe nahè, ñen kɒet oëndjig, ñen dhelɒen, kkéñatɒié khuyu édoetan tɒenven édjiw dindjié shel'égwahen, dindjié ttchiéd étan tchion zjég nahè. Akɒonlloe: voe kotàlloe kwoɒen nétoetènanhé yu, cheg kɒwa ey dindjié ñen kodathakº dhelɒen gwoɒat, tétɒion–silltchidhatɒié, nidjéndè voe ttcha dhitllé kwottset aha yu, voezjiouhun nénanzjié.

Akɒonlloe dindjié ninanhey yoe ttset dhézjia yu, yoe yénantchiyu, tchijié yoëndjik yu:

– Ey! nizjit gwottset inl'eg ttchiñen voe yondé éñéthey, nan kudjin? yaño.

– Aha! si lloe tittcho, yaño.

– Akɒonlloe: si lloe ñoe tchɒa îl'i, yaño: ñunkɒat yénishen kujit tittcho. Akɒon djugu gwottset noetɒateytchat kɒwa, yaño.

Akɒon v'iyondé akɒontté yaño:

– Ey! ʂ'itchɒa, dindjié tittcho kɒwa, si lloe tt ʂindjo ɒè dhidié chwon ttchon, évoekkétsoenatɒié, soe hèt è dindjié yenelyin, kwintschié ttset dindjié altsen. Zjionhon soekké-inhey, kkiné-inhey, yaño. Kukkan joe voe tchɒa:

ñi ttschien ttset nétɒischié kɒwa, yaño, si tthey noe kuhet kotɒènelhia, yénishen gwoɒat, tino. Eyiakɒon ñitchɒa kɒet zjé kwottset kitchohedh. Tɒaën kkaon kiyondé voe tchɒa kka-unidheltɒan:

– Akɒon ʂi tchɒa, ñoe ɒey duwé, djiño, ʂi tchi otoetey ʂoekɒet tɒèlla: Si tchɒa égwillhen, ñil'adoe noetazjié, tétɒéindjia. Akɒon tchidi aʂoekutɒendja lanval'i, kwoɒadoe tiñanttchotɒella, yaño.

Akɒon v'iyondé ttʂindjô ndow-tinttcho nakɒen ɒèdhidié, voe het zja kitédinitɒin ɒèdhidié, ey lloe ɒdhattʂègoe vañe; akɒon inl'ag yahan dhidié, ey lloe yékkɒay ttʂégoe vaño.

Akɒon zjé kwottset nikhidhéhèdhu, tchitɒen ttʂindjo édhôw eɒshan tthek; titɒsoeshoño kuñantthek, edhow neydendé kukkè tʂonatɒié, kukkhan ttʂindjô ê voekkè tsoenatɒié, ñité kiyonho; zjé kwizjit ñenthen konllen. Tʂoegenxi tthek kukkan élloe dindjié konllen. Zjé nizjin lloe nitsiankllen schi dhitllé. Tiyondé khiyañô:

– Schi voeɒènintchit, tiño, eylloe si tchɒa égwahen tiño. Etségéɒdhey dhenday tsoëndjig, detchɒan-ttchek dakay ttiet nitsenlloe, teyɒa tʂenintchit. Kukkan è tinllé voegutéttchen.

ñitchɒa keyha, azjoegwottsen ɒdha-ttʂégoe kitédinitɒin ɒè dhidié. Akɒon ey tchinénihéyu, inl'eg yékkɒay-ttségoe ñiténihey, kitè ɒè dhidié. Akronlloe dzjin tinégutizjik.

Ey tthey étségɛ́ɒdhey nizjin dindjié éñaïnlchit, kukkan joe èlloe voekkè tsoenatpié, ɒdha nakwatoekpat, akpon ɒdha-ttsègoe ninihey akpon tpadh tégutizjik.

Ey tchpan ñen then ninilloe, atsaha .yu tsenítchié kukkan dindjié étpilldji. Akronlloe kiyondè toe tchpa tédhiño:

– Si tchpa, èlloetthey nupwé tajié-kpet nikhénidhet, kkinèïnzjié ll'édji, tchutséïndja tpella ñoe ɒey kkéninltpié kpwa billi?

– Aha! èlloetthey khukkènitlpié, kukkan ñah kutpillttchia, kkinétpischia kpwa yénishen, yédhiño voe tchpa.

Akponlloe: yékkpay-ttségoe tchinénihéyu, voe tchpa yoe nttien kwentsell-kkéniltpien, voe hèk nizjin, éyi jé kuñahi. ɒdha-ttségoe kkayu tchinénihey, ey tthey kwentsell ttset voe ttan ttset kkénantpié.

Ti tchpa v'iyondé dhiño:

– Akponlloe kwentsell né het kpet kunil'hi, kukkan voe nttien ey zjé, tiño.

– Alloe, si tchpa, èlloetthey tchijié ñah kwellndak, tiyondè yaño; si lloe ninidhet tteytpet, sié gwottsen tchidhizjié. Nidjen ttsindjo kpet odhindjek. Ey gwopat kukkèninltpié kpwa yaño.

Tchpantchpat nakpen dzjin akpon tpadh nakpén kwéttchin vi yondè zjit; akpon kwinzjin-ttset ttsindjo kpet kunanhi. Voe then zjiow tinttcho, kukkan tpendjidhoettset zjé kunilhi. Viyondè yaño:

– Sitchpa, ñoe ɒey itihyin ñitté indjiékhédelttchu gwopall, kukkaninltpié, yaño.

Akpon nankwotlen tiyondè égwahen, djugu zjié kkaon nigunidhet. Viyondè dhiño:

– N'itsi ey ttsindjo nakpen ñiténilli, nan gwottset kkinénizjié, nan kkpagoe cheg dhindié tpèlla kpwa, éñédhago énétpindiya ñaño. Kukkan tpan kkpagoe odhinhey chwon! ñoekka kotpéïnday kunlpat nédjiño, ñaño, yaño viyondè.

Voe tchpa ttsindjo nakpen oéndjig, akpon voe tpié ttset kkinéizjié. Noetpainlen tsell pè nitchohèdh, tpenven ni ttschien vaepa van tchpô ñipé dhitllé, kokon tchugullu ñihey; kwottset kitchohèdh yu, édétan tchidi nidhézjia yu tpadh ñegutizjit. Ttsind jokpet ékukonlli.

– Tchidipadé siéhet-kpet akpwa? yénidhen. Kkinéizjié, kuχinkpat yénijit.

Nillen voepè ninizjié yu, tpatchié ttsindjôkpet nidohô, tpan kkpag odhohô; akpon zjannijia gwopat, tpan nadhéya ttsindjo-kpet tchizjan nattchet tinékutizjik.

Akponlloe dindjié shan tchojié, voe het nakpen tchizjan nattchet gwopat, vitpié ttset énédhitijié. Vitpie-sié èlloe itiyin tinttchô, kukkan tchpantchpat ttsindjo nakpen yétinille, ey pàh akponttéyaño:

– Yétèh ni nan kkaon gwottset kkiné-inzjié, yaño noekka kotpèinday.

Akponlloe ttsindjô inl'ag kitédinitpin pè dhidié, voe dindjiéju ttschié tanttcho, yoeti inidhen kpwa gwopalloe, yoepa Kuttchédé tégwanyin kpwa, akpon nizjigo voeñen-konllen yu, dindjiéju ttset keyhè kpwa. Eiakpon dzjin kket étpandja.

– Nidjendé ttset tpéjia billi? dindjié yénijit.

ɒdha ttset énédhitizjié, ttsindjô, èlloe viétchi, voe ttien édjittchi nètoenanhey kkitagunttcho.

– Nittsontsédé gwottsen nininhey? dindjié yaño; kukkan kenχi kpwa.

Elloetthey voehet nakpen vaétitindjik ttogwopall; eygwopat è vikii konlli.

Inl'ag-dzjin tthey ètpilldji gwopat, dindjié yékki tchidhizjia.

Tchidi voepè tinttcho? yénijit ttiet. Akponlloe ñita kkpagoe tchion kwajén, tchion dzjin, zjit, ttsindjo izjia. Kwozjit nanhè, ttchied étan, akpon klan jén yéklin tpet dhidié, yétpet dhitchi. Dindjié yékkènantpié yu, kodathako dhoedhanttchiyu énédhitizjié.

ñikkaen tthey ttsindjô nakpen khoetchodié. Inl'ag dindjiéju voetiinidhen, étpilldji. Tikpen yékki thidhizjia yu, nétoetènanhey. Takon ttô kkpagoe tédhidié, akpon takon tsell llen yattagu kkénantpié.

Voe zjé kwottset nètchidhizjié yu, ey kukkènantpié kwopé keyχè kpwa, kukkan voe endji initoedhet. Ey kwotlén voe zjé kozjit kkié tchantsen, voe het nakpen ñitè ñohèdh, khitékiikpet tpédjidhaakli. Zjé kwizjit nitikhinilli gwottset, tchikitchohèdh tthey.

Nakpennèkpen vikii-kpet ttsedé khukkpagoe niñantschiw. Dindjié:

– Akpudji kukkè tsénilpia! yénijit gwopat, voe kkié zjit ttsoedé tagoe nénilli. Inl'agoe vi kii-kpet ttchiñen nizjin, dakay, voe antsin-djilloe zjit ttatagotté-tchpan pè dhitpin. Dindjié kukkénantpien kkuyu ttsoedé khikpagoe néniñantschiw.

Inl'agoe tthey ttsindjô nizjin kpwa, ey vi kii kpet kkéñantpin. Ey! klan zjen zjankenlloe, dindjié kwajen, kuzja nitschié. Dindjiéju voe kkié zjit kuzja ɒaéñantchi yu, koeninidhet.

Kéhen niténizjia, èlloe siondall enlloe, attchié. Tikpen tchiténihey, khè kunkpat tchozjié. Khè dhitlla yu, voezjé gwottset nénétizjié yu, khè vehet yétinilloe.

Inl'ag voeñen konlli joe, eylloe khè oïndjig kpwa. Voe dindjié yaño:

– Ey khè sikii, yiñindhen billi; ey gwopat ñiñen konlli, yaño. Kukkan è genxi ttsindjô. Khé oëndjik, khidzi ètségɛ́ɒdhey kozjit ninihen, akponlloe khé tchi tpilkoethédh.

– Tʦindjò ttchahandiedh! dindjié ño. Akponlloe dindjié ttédidihi yu tagoe aha nidhatchié yu:

– Si tschien elttsik! yaño. Ttsindjò ttchahandièdh l'en-ilèré, l'en-tsen tthey tpédhitllé yu, oëndjik, yoenantcha, tikpen eñaantchit; kukkan elttsik tétizjik kpwa, tchion tsintè yédhelpen kpwa.

Eyiakpon yékkpay etchit sodjil. Ttsindjò ttchahandièdh inl'ag ttʦindjò vaño:

– Nan zjey ñi kii-kpet yakonlloe gwopat, nan voekki tpankay. Si lloe nellhè, yaño. Akpon ttʦindjò ttchahandièdh kottsel' tchitpidhizjié yu, étpilldji.

Ey gwopat djien kwottset voe kpwa tatpèdja. La Compagnie patiédhezjia yu, ttsindjò ttchahandiedh enlloe billi! yéniishen.

Akponlloe gwottset tchozjié, dindjiéju, kakétchopal voe ttsindjò nizjin yékki tchozjié; kukkan chwon kédhétik, chwon yoekkitchozjié; voetchi zjé dhantsen, dindjiéju. Van tchpò vén nidhézjia yu, voe kpéintlen, yendièdhey-ttsen voe dindjié kpwon kwantsen, yoettset tchozjié yu, akpon atenhen gwottsen nédhéjyé.

Nakpen akpontinttcho lloe:

– Soe dindjié onhan soetpiltchj kudjin, yénijit ttogopalloe, koyendowttset pdha dindjiéju van tchpò djigundiégu, ninizjié yu, yétchi zjé tcheltsen. Akpon voehet tpén vén viné tinizjia yu, nattsi tanoezjié, voe konkkit ninizjié yu, atenhen dindjié nétchiheg yépé khédhètik. Dindjiéju atenhen vochey kkièdh voe kpeyzjé nédhelhiw, atenhen inl'ag heyzjédhiw, akpon ttʦindjò yéttset tchiélkiek.

– Akponlloe onhan soe tpinltchi gwopat soel'é inhey! yaño nétpehey kwétchi. Yè tthen odhindjek, vi kiikpet yékkaon ninilloe, akponlloe dindjiéjyu è yepé tchozjié, yékki tchihey tthey ttʦindjò pè dhidié tinétizjik.

Akponlloe eykpet nupwétajiékpet kenlloe tatpédja.

(9:177-190)

The Sea Captain

When the world began, two brothers lived alone on the earth. The younger liked to be completely nude. Indoors, out-of-doors, he went about without any apparel. His most usual occupation was making arrows.

One night when both were in bed, the elder, who loved his younger brother dearly, said to him:

"Little brother, shoot an arrow into my armpit."

As it was night, the older brother was also naked. He had taken off his clothes to sleep.

The younger replied:

"I do not wish to do that, big brother."

"Ah! little brother," said the elder, "your arrows are without strength; this is why you do not wish to strike me, for if you struck me, you know full well that the arrows would not penetrate."

Offended by this taunt, the younger took his bow, aimed it at his brother, lodged an arrow in his chest, and so killed him.

Then the parents wept, and the younger brother – he whose custom it was to go naked – wept also: in despair, he left the tent and at last departed, never to return.

His parents sought him in vain. He never came back.

After his departure, his mother conceived again and brought forth a third son who grew up to be very strong. His story is the following:

Dindjié – the name of this man – having grown to be a man, began to hunt and kill animals to provide food. But as he hunted, one thought was always uppermost in his mind:

One of my brothers is dead; the other has vanished. What can have become of him? I must find him.

Thus one day, while hunting on the shores of the Great Water, he heard the great arctic loon howling as he disported himself there.

– "Why does this loon howl so?" thought *Dindjié*. "No doubt he can see reindeer and fears them, which is why he is howling."

Such were the young man's thoughts. Having discovered a reindeer trail, he therefore followed it with all speed, sighted reindeer, pursued them and arrived at the shores of the Great Water which I have just mentioned.

This lake (or sea) was vast and covered with waterfowl which swam there. *Dindjié* wanted to kill some of these birds and hid himself to observe them.

Suddenly, far out on the water, he saw something black which looked like a man's head emerging from the water.

"What can that be?" he thought. He hid himself again and watched.

After waiting for a long time for the object to move, *Dindjié* was able to distinguish quite clearly the head of a very tall man who was standing in the water. Hiding his head behind a clump of rushes, the man was getting close to the waterfowl.

seizing their legs and pulling them down under the water where he wrung their necks. This was the stranger's way of hunting.

Dindjié looked for the hunter's clothes and found them on the shore, for the man was naked in the water. *Dindjié* hid himself near the clothes to spy on the hunter.

The latter, having seized and killed all the waterfowl, came out of the water, ran to where he had left his clothes and put them on again.

But then *Dindjié*, who had remained hidden until that moment, ran up to the stranger, kissed and embraced him, and, his arms still about him, said:

"Long ago, a boy killed his elder brother and then fled. Was that not you? "

"Yes, alas! " said the other. "It was indeed I."

"Then learn that I am your younger brother, who has sought you long. Now that I have found you, I will never leave you again", he said.

Then the elder brother, who had fled and been lost to his own, became melancholy and said to his brother:

"Alas, my brother, I am no longer an ordinary man. I have married the invisible, all-powerful woman, who can suffer neither the presence nor the sight of any man but myself, and whose sense of smell is so acute that she scents men afar off and flees from them. It is thus impossible that you should come with me. Return whence you came."

But the younger said:

"I shall not leave you, my brother. I want to see the invisible woman too."

Then the two brothers went towards the elder's dwelling, on the way the younger was given these instructions.

"Now young brother, your sister-in-law is very powerful and very terrible. I shall therefore question her first, and tell her: I have just found my young brother again, consent to his living with me." And you will act according to her reply.

Thus spoke the elder brother.

This man had married two superb women. One, the real wife, the one seated near the door, was called *Rdha-ttsègoe* (evening-woman). The other, the concubine, who stayed inside the tent, was called *Yèkkpay-ttségoe* (morning-woman).

As the two brothers neared the dwelling, they heard the sound as of a woman outside the tent, tanning hides. The noise of the scraper could be heard, the scraper moved – but the woman was invisible.

The two brothers entered the tent. There was game there and plenty of venison. Women's voices were heard, but no human form could be seen.

The tent was a fine one, at the furthest end of which good meat was hung. As the elder brother entered, he said:

"Now, my wives, give us meat to eat, for this man is my younger brother, whom I have just found again."

Then, it was as if someone took excellent pemican, placed it in a clean wooden bowl, and offered the dish to the newcomer. But the hand which did all that remained unseen.

However, the two brothers ate together.

I have said that when the two men arrived, the official wife, the evening-wife, was seated at the threshold. When the meal was over, she left the tent and the other wife, the morning-wife, returned and taking her rival's place beside the door, produced the day. As to the evening-wife, she went away.

But when evening came, she returned, and at once night fell. She brought with her much game, the fruit of her hunting. Another meal was taken, then everyone went to bed. But the young traveller saw no woman lying beside his elder brother.

However, the latter said to his younger brother: "Little brother, our parents are still living. You should return to help them: I imagine you have not yet seen your sisters-in-law." "No brother," replied the younger, "I have not yet seen them, but I do not propose to leave. I want to remain with you."

Just then, the evening-wife was leaving, and the younger brother glimpsed her from behind. He saw only her garment, which was dazzling. He saw no more.

When evening came, the morning-wife left in turn, and he glimpsed her also, but again only from behind. Then he said to his elder brother:

"I am beginning to see your wives a little, but only from behind." The elder replied:

"Little brother, I have not yet told you everything. I was dying, and set out for the moon, where I took these two women to wife. They are moon people, and this is why you cannot see them – they are not mortal like you."

The younger brother stayed two more days and nights with his elder brother and then he came to see his brother's two wives clearly. They were white as snow.

The elder said to him:

"Little brother, your sisters-in-law are pleased with you, that is why they allow you to see them."

Now, it had been fall when the younger brother found his elder brother, and winter had come in the twinkling of an eye. The elder said:

"Little brother, my father-in-law, the Old Man in the Moon, who gave me both his all-powerful daughters in marriage, has just ordered me to return to the lunar kingdom, and he gives you my two wives, but with this warning:

"When you return to your own country, do not pass over ice. This is to test you. These are the words of my father-in-law. So now, farewell, little brother."

With these words, the elder brother departed for the kingdom of the moon, and the younger went on his way, with the wives.

They arrived all three at a waterfall formed by a narrow passage through which water rushed and fell to water below; there was thus a great lake to the right and another to the left, and the narrow channel with its waterfall before them. At this point, there was a very short portage, which made it possible to avoid the ice of the great lakes.

The man with two wives went across the portage first, mindful of the words of the Old Man in the Moon. Yet, when night came, the two women who were following him did not appear.

"Why do my two wives not follow me? " thought *Dindjié*. He retraced his steps and began to look for them near the strip of river which fell in a cascade between the two lakes.

Then, far out on the lake, he saw his two wives coming over the ice. But because they were warm, the ice melted beneath their feet, broke open and they were swallowed up into the great lake and drowned.

So the man returned alone to his father-in-law Moon. The old man was displeased. However, he consented to give him two more of his daughters, just like the first two, saying:

"Return once more to earth. I shall test you."

Now, one of *Dindjié's* new wives, the one sitting near the door refused her husband, for she hated him. She would not work for him; she was ill-tempered and always discontented; she never spoke to him.

When day came, this wife vanished, and *Dindjié* wondered:

"Where can she have gone? "

In the evening, this shrewish wife returned, hiding something behind her back.

"Where have you been? " asked her husband.

She did not deign to reply.

Dindjié had not yet consummated his marriage with either wife. He thus had no children.

However, when day came, the evening-wife disappeared once more, but her husband followed her at a distance.

"Where is she going, and why does she want to go? " he wondered.

Then he saw her walking naked into a black, filthy swamp. There she stood upright, with a black snake wound around her. Witness of this abomination, *Dindjié* was thunderstruck, and left the evening-wife where she was.

The next day, both wives were in their usual places; when evening came, the one who loved her husband left in turn. *Dindjié* followed her also and hid to spy on her. He saw her sitting naked amidst a flock of arctic grouse, and a host of young grouse clung to her breasts, and she gave them suck.

When he returned home, *Dindjié* was careful not to speak of what he had seen, but he pondered it.

Some time later, while the man was sitting in his tent making arrows, his two wives came in carrying their children, whom they laid down in the tent. All of them were covered by a blanket.

"I must see them! " thought the man.

Lifting one of the blankets with the point of his arrow, he saw that the children of the wife whom he loved were white and pretty. Their noses were pierced and decked with feathers from the swan, for their mother had adorned them. In short, they were fine children.

Dindjié looked at them and replaced the cover, smiling. Then he looked at his bad wife's children. Ah! They were snake-beings, black, hideous and with huge, gaping jaws. Horrorstruck, the man thrust his arrow into their throats, which killed them.

Meanwhile, their mother came back in and flew into a terrible rage. The husband said nothing, but went out to hunt hares; he snared some and returned to the tent to have his wives prepare the food. The bad wife did not want to eat white hares. Her husband said to her:

"I see that you are refusing to eat because you imagine that these hares are my children."

She made no reply, took the hares, put pemican in their ears, and at once, they revived and ran away into the forest.

"What a wicked woman! " exclaimed the husband, angry at having lost the fruit of his hunting.

To test her further, *Dindjié* laid down and pretended to be ill.

"I have pains in my stomach", he said.

The bad wife took the urine and faeces of a dog and made a mixture which she gave to her husband as medicine. But the poison did him no harm.

That was how things stood when they struck camp the next day. Then the bad evening-wife said to her rival:

"Since you are the only one with children, stay with your husband. For my part, I have decided to stay here".

So saying, she ran into the swamps and disappeared. Nothing was every heard of her again. When the Hudson's Bay Company came here, we thought it was the bad evening-wife who had returned to us.

Then *Dindjié* disgusted with moon women, departed, resolved to abandon even the wife who loved him, and made with all haste towards his own country and his old parents. But his wife followed in his footsteps at a distance.

Unfortunately, the poor girl could not run as fast as he. She had great difficulty in following him. The husband always set up camp before she arrived, and the poor wife did not arrive at the camp until the fugitive had already departed.

Thus walking and chasing after the faithless one, she arrived at the shore of a large lake and saw her husband on the other side, where he had already lit a fire. She ran towards the spot, but before she could cross the lake, *Dindjié* had gone. This happened twice. She was in despair.

Then the morning-wife said to herself:

"It is plain that my husband wants to desert me, for he must have seen me coming across the lake. I will resort to guile."

So, when evening had come and her husband was encamped on the far shore of a large lake, the morning-wife, instead of crossing the lake in full view, went around it through the woods – a very difficult journey.

As she approached the tent, *Dindjié* was preparing to leave. He had already put on one of his snowshoes and was just putting on the second when the unhappy wife ran up to him.

"What, you are deserting me! " she cried. "You want to go without me? "

So saying, she seized his legs and clung to his knees, and threw upon him the children she was carrying.

Then *Dindjié* took pity on her. He took back his wife and never left her again; he followed her, and this morning-wife, now the man's true wife, thus became the mother of the *Dindjié* people. These were our ancestors, we are told.

(Told by the *Dindjié, Sylvain Vitoedh,* in December 1870, at Fort Good Hope.)

(11:16-29)

2° Etɒoetchokɒen

Etɒoetchokɒen ttɒotchédi ttsi dheltsén.

Udetllet zjoe atti ɒaïtɒien, tɒè adjia lloe, yetɒow ntillklet.

Atti étɒelldjia, tchidjanen gwoɒat.

Yendjit kkɒi ttizjé ɒaïtɒien tthey, tɒè ondow tédildjia, akɒon yétɒow ntillklet ayu, étélla.

– Ey vizjit ttsi tchɒô t'el'tsia tédiño.

Ey kwootlen zje ttsoevi llen kkɒag tédhtchijia yu, ey kkɒag ataetédhelklla yu dheltchi.

Akɒon kkɒi ttizjé ɒal'atanen, détchɒan koyézjoeg dhitllé, tinétizjik.

Aɒwodh tchɒan zjigoe dhitllé.

Koyendow-dzjin ttsi kosjé ɒandhitllé, ttsi tédhitlin dhitɒin tthey. Tchion kkit niltɒan, kukkan zjoe voe kkɒag tchion konllen.

Akɒon Etɒoetchokɒen dheltchi tchɒantchɒat, nikkɒaon ttsi djizé, détchɒan voeklen kelltchen tchɒantchɒat, akɒon tɒenhen yoekkɒagoe dheltɒin.

Tchion ttset nétchidhéllik yu, ttsi zjit ilya.

Azjoegoe yeïndjit tchinitschié tag ttset néïnhè, tchion kkɒag dhéhen. Ttétsien, tchi nékɒag kkit tédhidié yu, dheltchi tthey.

Etɒoetchokɒen ténihey kuyu, toe ontschiw tidihey, akɒontag ɒatchihéy, ttétsien deltchi voenant agoettset ontschiw zjit nilt in.

Ttétsien akɒontté yaño:

Tchi nékɒag gwottsen kwotɒé ɔoetɒinlttha chon. Ey neltsi l'édji kuttié nittschié dindjié elloekɒwa tétɒidjia lanval'iño.

Akpontté kukkan Etpoetchokpen pan ttset han-yoedhayedh kuyu, kwotpè yoenaltthet.

Tpatchotllé, voe zjek tpadoenanen, akpon voe tthen yézjiugu dhitllé.

Etpoetchokpen tagoe ttset noetpakpè yu, kwottset dindjié konllen odhoedhant-tchitt.hè. Zjégoe naha gwopat kové l'étsénédha; eygwopat dindjié khétiyin.

Etpoetchokpen kwottset ntpakpè. Kukkan zjé zjit teytthen zjin dhitllé. Dindjié élloekpwa.

Tchiéllugu tthey, elltpin tchpan, eyzjin zjandheltchi.

Akponlloe tchpantchpat yéiindjit kwottset odhoedhanttchi. Kwottsen ntpakpè tthey. Kukkan zjoe è dindjié konlli, zjion kkitinttcho.

Akpontinttcho, ttétsien ttset noetpakpayu, voe tthen kuñahiyu, voe tthen dakay dhitllé él'adoe ninilloe kuyu, ttsoedé khikkpag ninantschiw yu, voe tthen tpatoenanenn kodathako siè nénilloe. Kukkan voe kpé-ttsed inl'agjé akpwa, étpilltchi.

Akpon kukkan Etpoetchokpen ttétsien tthen kkpag dhétlet gwopalloe, tlad vizjit dindjié nadheltsen; ttétsien napudenday akpon; kukkan zjoe voe kpè-ttsed tpieg zjey.

Akponlloe Etpoetchokpen voe ttsi zjigoe tédhidié yu, ttétsien tthey yépé dhidié. Dindjié nakwotllé kunkpat, yénidhen gwopat.

Akpon ey tchiéllugu, elltpin tchpan zjandheltehi, djiño, ey kuttset tpadheykpé, kukkédétpag ttset tpénahey.

– Dji elltpin voe voet èñintchi! ttétsien ño.

Ehakpon té andjiék ttogopall, ye voet kadjoedhankpen yu, ndowéttset dindjié llen ey gwottset tchizjiandidjia.

Akpon tchiéllugu tthey ttétsien éakpon tanttcho gwopat, voe voet gwottsen ttsindjõ konllen kiyondidjia. Akpon lloe tthey dindjié llen tinégutizjit.

(9:190-194)

The Sailor

Etpoetchokpen, the sailor, was the first to build a canoe. In spring, he chose the best barks and tried them out. First, he tore the bark from fir trees, threw it in the water, jumped onto it and let it float with the current. It sank to the bottom.

Then he tore the bark from paperbirch, flung it in the water, leapt onto it and let it float with the current. It floated wonderfully well. He therefore chose it to build his canoe, which he was able to make through his magic powers.

He therefore climbed to the top of a tall fir tree, bound himself to it and slept. In that instant, the bark, withes and frames for the future canoe appeared at the foot of the tree. *Etpoetchokpen* slept a second night and when he woke up, the ribs were all in place and the canoe built.

So he set it afloat, but it leaked from every side. *Etpoetchokpen* climbed back up his tree and spent a third night there, and the next day the canoe was caulked, the withes set in the bottom, and the oar included. So the boatman got in and set off down river.

In the beginning, we are told, the otter and the mouse lived together. The sailor arrived at their dwelling and the otter, which ate human flesh, gave *Etpoetchokpen* something to eat. She gave him ground meat which looked like red powder. It was in fact human flesh, dried and grated by the mouse.

The otter, who is the devil, therefore stayed where she was and gave the man this warning:

"As you go down river, do not drink river water, but only the water of a swiftly flowing stream which feeds it."

But the otter intended to trick the man.

So, when the sailor was once more on his way and looking for this stream, the otter ran alongside him on the shore: the man cried out to the devil:

"Is this the stream? "

"No, farther down."

"Here? "

"Farther down."

"Surely it is this little river? "

"No, I tell you, it is much farther downstream."

Etpoetchokpen continued on his way, but soon he found that the river was jammed with rotting corpses, skulls and bones, dead bodies floating. So many were there that they looked like islands above the water.

The devil was still running along the shore abreast of the canoe. To avoid him, the boatman pulled towards the opposite bank; but the devil-otter swam across the river before he reached it, and waited for him there.

Not knowing how to force a passage through the floating corpses, *Etpoetchokpen* said to the devil:

"Weave to and fro ahead of my boat, to clear a passage for me."

The otter obeyed him. It swam and swam amidst the corpses, and the boatman, paddling his boat after it, pressed on through the labyrinth of islands formed by the piles of dead bodies. At last, he reached the other bank, where he camped and slept for a very long time.

The next day, the sailor killed two beavers and camped once more. While he slept, the otter and the fisher entered his body through the rectum. But he awoke and cut a branch of willow, made a loop in it, and with this instrument pulled the two vile parasites from his body; they gained nothing from their adventure, but the dubious colour of their skins and the foul odor they exude.

Then, the boatman set off once more in his canoe and saw a living being, a man, spearing fish with a trident. *Etpoetchokpen* spying on him secretly, changed himself into a pike and approached the man without being seen. The sailor rose to the surface of the water to bask in the sun. The man with the trident thought he could reach it with his spear, but found he had pierced only a clump of bog-weed.

Resuming his original form, the boatman rowed on in search of men and reached the place called: "There where only the human heart exists".

Now, on the river bed there dwelt *Nopodhittchi*, with his wife and daughter. At this time, he was not at home. The sailor went into the giant's abode, made himself comfortable, and sat beside the giant's wife for many days.

Suddenly, the Violent One arrived in a canoe. His wife had told *Etpoetchokpen*:

"If my husband arrives and the wind is in this direction, be off as fast as you can in your canoe."

The boatman therefore set out again over the water, pursued by the dogs of *Nopodhittchi* (The Violent One), yelping for his blood. He killed the Violent One's wife, climbed up a fir tree and passed water; there resulted a great river into which he pushed the giant's daughter. She drowned and floated away.

Then *Etpoetchokpen* went in search of the men who had died in those waters. Sitting in his canoe, he rocked upon the water. From this rocking such great waves resulted that the whole earth was covered and flooded. The water thundered, the torrents roared, there was a total flood. No one could save himself.

Seized with horror, *Etpoetchokpen* noticed a sort of giant straw punctuated with holes. He climbed onto it and caulked it, for his canoe had been engulfed by the waves and had sunk. And his giant straw floated on the waters, which could not sink it.

The sailor floated onwards in his giant stalk casing until the waters had evaporated and the earth had dried. He then alighted on a mountain peak, where his stalk had come to rest.

The boatman stayed long on this high ground, and descended only after several days. This mountain is called the "Resting Place of the Old One", for it was here that

Etpoetchokpen stayed. It is the peak which rises to the right of Fort MacPherson, in the Rocky Mountains.

Downstream along the river (Yukon), two very tall pinnacles of rock are separated by a narrow gully. At this point, the current is fast and powerful. Standing with one leg on each rock so that the river flowed between his legs, and dipping his hands in the water, the sailor seized the corpses of men which floated past, just as one scoops up fish.

Having gone further down towards the sea of Beavers, *Etpoetchokpen* perceived a hydra, lying prone, its jaws gaping, in mid-stream, so that all the water rushed between those jaws in a swift torrent. *Etpoetchokpen* sailing onwards, passed through the jaws of the sea monster, passed through its body in the rushing stream, and came out through its back passage. This was his last adventure as a sailor.

Then *Etpoetchokpen*, having disembarked, set out in search of living survivors. There were no men left alive. There was only the Raven perched on one claw on a tall rock, sleeping, his hunger satisfied.

The sailor, a sack in his hand, climbed to the top of the rock, surprised the Raven in his sleep and captured him in his sack, intending to kill him.

Then, the Raven said to him:

"I beg you, do not hurl me down from this rock; if you do, I shall make all the men remaining on earth disappear, and you will find yourself alone in the world."

Nevertheless, *Etpoetchokpen* hurled the Raven down from the rock and its body was shattered into a thousand pieces, and its bones scattered at the foot of the mountain. Then he set off again.

But the Raven's prediction proved correct. Soon the sailor thought he heard the sound of men's voices as they passed the night in desporting themselves, for it was the time of the summer solstice, when the sun does not sink below the horizon, and the night is passed in amusements. But he had been mistaken: he saw no human beings. He travelled long, he travelled far, but found no one. All the tents were abandoned, there were no more men on the earth. *Etpoetchokpen* saw only a loach and a pike stretched out on the mud, basking in the sun.

He therefore returned to where the white bones of the Raven lay scattered at the foot of the mountain. He collected the bones together, assembled them and put them back in place as best he could, then he put a blanket over them and farted over it, and this fart set all the bones back in place and restored flesh and life to them. But he had been unable to find one of the Raven's claws, so that when it was restored to life, it had only three claws on its feet.

The sailor had done this so that the Crow (an evil spirit) might help him to repeople the earth. They therefore went to the beach where the pike and the loach

were sleeping in the sun, their bellies on the mud; then the Crow said to *Etpoetchokpen*:

"Do you pierce the belly of the pike whilst I do as much for the loach."

So when *Etpoetchokpen* pierced the flank of the pike, a host of men issued forth. The devil-Crow did as much for the loach and from this fish there streamed forth a multitude of women.

In this manner, we are told, the earth was repopulated.

(Told by *Dindjié Sylvain Vitoedh*, in December 1870, at Fort Good Hope)

(11:30-38)

30 Ennahi or Ekta-odu-hini, and Nopodhittchi.

Etpoetchokpen nazjié ayu ttsit han hozjié tchojié, ttsit dhelpen nan kwozjit, yattcho. Ennahi kwottsen agudikki padhéjié, tpadh, ttsi-kutiñi toekloedh.

– Soe tchey, sédétchi pàh nan zjeg noepagutpolla ll'édji! yaño kotchpô.

– Akpwa! dindjié ño. Etaoduhini Etpoetchokpen ndétchitchitizjié yu, payénantchi. Nan doetthen gwopat, chwon ttset tédihi, voe détchi ttiet nan kkèdhannen, akponlloe voepa toepan kkigwenhè tinétizjik.

– Akponlloe, si lloe è dindjié dellpdha! yaño:

Etpoetchokpen yettset pathpèjiw. Yé kko téodhindjek, étoetéyidié ttset tédidjik.

Zjiel lloe voetépan tédhidié.

– Choe ñan zjié! yaño.

Yéchoe azjia Zjen enlloe. Zjié ven kédhétik.

– Soe tchey, yétièh klô natpahô, yaño. Voetpal'pah koeñanchi, kkeyendjil'. Akpon ey klô yaño, athen kenlloe ttehon.

Voel'é tchijié.

Soe tchey, kkè nakpen koetehodié, yaño. Voetpal' pah khidhapè, show khoe tanzji, voel'étchojié, kodathako kkéyendjil'. Dendjig lloe khékiyaño. Dendjig-entehpan voenéñan-tschit.

– ñahé! yaño. Kukkan joe, chwon ttset tédizjik. Voel'é tchojié tchpantchpat.

– Soe tchey, soe kkadh gwottset édéhal! yaño. Soe tchey, Nopodhittchi soetchidanhè, tiño.

Akponlloe pan-ttset nakadh oltllet, alkak zjit voeh! voeh! voeh! tiño. Toetpèdinihey: tpan kkpag tpelkak. Tpan vittset, ño. Nan kkit ninédhijié dindjié tinétihig. Nopodhittchi tinttcho.

– Soe tchey, voe kpéttchadé tpannéñintcha, yaño.

Etaoduhini ékponttédiño joe Etpoetchokpen yekpèttchadé tpan neñatchill gwopat, kwihit tatanen, voekko-ttsiunhé kkannédhatchit yéétchidhapdha.

Voe ttsindjô éñédha nénidhéjié yu. Nopodhittchi voe ttsindjô, ey tchpan Etpoetchokpen yekkè-dan-kpa, voe klet dhakpa yu, yedhelxen, ninidhet.

– Soe tchey, vi kii konlli, voe ttset inhey, voe tchinlpdha, yaño Etaoduhini. Etpoetchokpen yettset tchojié. Intsi vah: voe zjoegoe djion tetpoll'a, yénijit. Ttchiñen ttchek zjit dhidié kkelloe: wuh! wuh! tiño. Kwottset tchojié, tinllé zjit yétchi-tthen oëndjik, yé kkannédhatchil yu, vi tchipan nétiñédhédja.

Nopodhittchi vi éttsi ttsé itchin enlloe gonlli, yéttset tchojié, ttsoevi tchpô llé kkpag tédhdhéjié. Etpoetchokpen, dheylloezj, voe l'azj nillen tchpô tinétizjik, yétièh étpèta ttsétchin, èpilldji, tchion yè dhelpen, ninidhet.

Ey kwotlen nédhijié. Ehtaoduhini, voe l'en konllen. Siè tthey, zjow tthey, athen tchpan, nidzjin tchpan, kodathako ttsell étpikidhohô. Akponlloe Eta-oduhini:

– ne nen vunkpat inhey Etpoetchokpen ttset tiño. Vàh voe tpadh yéñatpien.

– Soe l'en nézjandhelzen kottschié nédinhey, yaño. Ey gwopat dindjié nédhéjié.

Kuyu, tsoeyi nendjiw voe llè kkpag dhétchi, klla zjit toetthen atoetédhikli yu dhétchi. Tpadh nigunijit, pan ttset koekpaéda tthek: paw! paw! tthek. Zjow détchpan zjannelpadh. Akponlloe Etoetpétchokpen ézjel:

– Itsi, nel'en soe detchpan kotpanenelpwo, ézel' Akponlloe Etaoduhini voe l'en kunkpat kenxi:

– Voe dzjey! voe dzjin! tsey! tsey! vèh! vèh! tiño. Kodathako yettset zjontpelkidohô. Klô ey tchidi nénizjié kiño.

Tchottoendow dindjié tsenlloe. Ndowé tipen kkitchojié, voetpadh zjit ttchédoe-tapak kwodheltsen. Etaoduhini voetpadh zjit.

(9:194-198)

EHTA – ODU – HINI

(He who sees both in front and behind)

Etpoetchokpen, while out hunting, spied the earth of an enormous porcupine. He entered it, killed the porcupine and roasted it underground. From without, the flames and smoke from this fire could be seen issuing forth.

Then *Ehta-odu-hini* went towards this underground fire, during a very dark night. He struck the ground with his stone axe, saying to the man:

"I will open a passage for you."

The man refused to come out. But "He who sees both in front and behind" took pity on his foolishness. He laboured long, pitting his strength against the hard ground, striking ever harder with his flint spear to make an opening, and finally he unearthed the man, and said to him:

"Have no fear, little son, I am kind and kill no one. I have come to deliver you."

Etpoetchokpen therefore came out of the hole on hands and knees and went towards the kind giant. *Ehta-odu-hini* lifted him by the scruff of the neck like a little cat and placed him on his shoulder, and so set off.

Ehta-odu-hini had a louse on his stomach.

"Here," he said to the man, "seize that louse which is pricking me and put it between my teeth."

The man obeyed. But this louse was nothing other than a great musk rat!

Carrying the man on his shoulder, the good giant strode through the sky.

"Look, little son," he said next, "look at those mice scampering below."

Now, what he called mice were in fact reindeer!

The giant hurled his spear at these animals and struck them.

They went on further.

"Little son, look at those hares sitting on their haunches."

What he called hares were in fact moose! He speared them and slung them around his waist as if they had been partridge and went on his way.

All was devoured in a single meal.

He gave *Etpoetchokpen* a whole side of moose:

"Eat that," he said to him. But it was too much for the man.

The giant went on further.

"Little son," he said "we shall go together to my fishing reserves."

On the way, he added:

"*Nopodhittchi* (the Most Violent One) has sworn my death, for he hates me."

Suddenly, a fox ran past over the ice. He tried to go through it for it was transparent, but finding that he was unable to do so, he grew angry at its hardness, crying: "The ice is deceptive."

All at once, this fox changed into a man, for it was the evil one himself, *Nopodhittchi*.

He hurled himself upon *Ehta-odu-hini* and they fought for a long time, hand to hand. The latter was beginning to weaken when, remembering the man, he called out:

"Cut, my son, cut the tendon of his leg."

Etpoetchokpen cut *Nopodhittchi's* leg tendon causing him to fall and then killed him. *Nopodhittchi's* wife had run to the scene and the sailor cut the tendon in her neck and thus dealt her a mortal blow.

"Little son," called the good giant, "the Violent One has a son: rush upon him and kill him also."

The infant was still in his birch-bark cradle. He hurled himself at the man, crying: *"Wu! Wu!"* *Etpoetchokpen* split open his chest and smashed in his skull with the iron of his spear.

Nopodhittchi had also a nubile daughter. *Etpoetchokpen* violated her; then, climbing to the top of a tall fir tree, he urinated. This made a river in the waves of which the nubile daughter drowned and was carried away towards the sea.

After these adventures, *Etpoetchokpen* retraced his steps. *Ehta-odu-hini* had many dogs, such as the bear, the reindeer, the moose, the lynx, the wolf, etc. They had all run away into the woods. The good giant therefore said to the man:

"Return to your mother." He made him a gift of his stick, adding:

"Go now, lest my dogs tear you to pieces, for they all seek your death. If ever you are in great danger, call my name and I shall hasten to your aid; for I am henceforth your powerful and kindly protector."

Etpoetchokpen therefore bade the good giant farewell and when night came, he climbed to the branches of a tall fir tree and made himself secure to sleep there, for he feared the dogs of the Mighty Spirit of Good. And indeed, during the night he heard the tread of animals and a strange noise: "*paw! paw!*" It was the sound of wolves gnawing the base of his fir tree to bring it down and devour the man.

Then *Etpoetchokpen*, in his terror, raised his voice and began to cry out:

"Grandfather, your dogs are trying to make me fall by felling my tree."

At once he heard "He who sees" calling his dogs: "*Voedzey! Voedzin! Voedzey! Voedzin! tsey! tsey! vèh! vèh!*" And at that same moment, wolves, bears and jackals left the tree to run back to their master. It is said that the mouse arrived first.

From this moment on, *Etpoetchokpen* was a man, he went back to his mother and followed her in her nomadic wanderings, performing miracles with the help of the stick which the Good and Almighty one had given him.

(Told by *Sylvain Vitoedh*, in 1870, at Fort Good Hope)

(11:38-43)

Kpwon-étan tthey Nakantsell tthey ttsindjô pahan nil'eykoetapan. Ttsindjo L'atpatsandia buzji. Nakantsell voetchiakpen konllen tinétizjik. Kpwonétan kodathakº tpadanshet. Ey tthey voe tchiakpet llen. Ey gwopat ettsendow shan ñipakwitéttchin, nizjigo ñil'eykhoedhapè ttogopalloe.

ñil'eykhoetapan. Ttsindjô nizjin L'atpatsandia, kiténivia, tsow-kit téshoetchpo ttien ttset vendjikaneltsi kwindjia néyitchitiyik. Kiténivia tagoettset-oëndjik tchittschiet kokkénatpié. Edétan kuttié tchitpen ñil'eykoedhapè. Kpwon-étan Dindjié-kpet tchanten gwopat, voe tchpa dhapen. L'atpatsandia vi kii kkèlloe kpwa.

Akpon kpwon-étan tchilkiek kuyu, voe tchpa tthey, nillen nan ttset paenlen ey voepè nékidhéjya yu. Dindjié llen kupâh kukkè koetpatsi. Kpwon-étan nillen nahantinézjié; voe tchpa tchidi ékpontindjo; akpon yè kkaon voetpow tchojié. Voe tchpa toetpèdinizjié yu, voe hey naltcha tinétizjik, voekkè ll'u konllen, nitié ttset tédizjik gwopat, chwo tpakii yu, viyondè yédhapey.

Kpwon-étan vi kii konlii. Vi kii titpié ttschié nadjet gwopat, tchi noekpag, yétièh nizjit nédenhè, gwottsen vikii kwodatlan tedhtchojié. Kpwon-étan yékki-kédétik yu, tchi tchpô kkpag tedhidié. Vikii tthey yàh kwéttchin.

– Soe hanzé, yaño, klla étan tédihi yu, ìtllu. Siàt tchi padjinlli. Noedzjéré soe kkpag tchindéninlli, yaño. Klla ètan lloe, kpwon nétillik, yoetilkkin, yatag tdha-llé, kpwon nathey yu, khé kunkpat kuñahi. Yéttschié ttset khé étpizié yu, zjow kpwon pa

tsié deditpik, kpwon nèdjopaw gwopat, kpwon noethoen, kpwon étan kédhétik, atsé kuyu, kpwon étan tchi koetpow nédhizjié. Ey gwopat Kpon-étan vazji.

Eyiakpon Kpwon-étan tikii vaño:

– Kpwon siat neltsen, yaño, Vikii yatag tsow kkèdédhankpal', ñikkpagtègoetétidhilli, akpon kpwon djidhikkien.

Akponlloe Kpwon-étan voenllé-chow tchpô odhindjek, ti kii kadjedhankpen, yé tschien éñanthey yu, yédhelpen, akpon tthey kwotpè-yénandjia.

Ey kwotlen lloe voet siénoedjéttsen eypàh Dindjié kkedadhpa yu. Dindjié kodathakº dhelpen. Titthen kwizjey ékudittchen, tiyéta tthey kuzjin tinttcho.

Ey tchi tchpô voe kkpag akpontindja. Kpwon-étan yaño:

– Tchi tchpô lloe, si tsi ttpotchédi-ten nakpay ñè ttset noenelshet. Tè tiñanttcho?

Akpwon gwottsen, ti zjé gwottset nétchitik, vé pey toedindjiéjyu ninidhoet tlen. Kpwon-étan odhindjek. Ttsindjôw zjôh zjié dhidié, zjégoe-dhéhè dhitchi, scharahnidhizjié, voekpè-ttchadé hey ttiet pakpat gwopat.

– Soe pey, Kpwon-étan yaño, kwallndak ttset titinhi.

– Soe kpéy-ttchadé pakpat, yaño ttsindjô, nitchi negutillklet, té djinño?

Kpwon-étan voetchpa l'entsell inl'agzjé vikii kkaon nidhelschien.

– Soe pey, atenhen dhitchi kitagunttcho. Onhan nétchindik, nél'en atsé ll'édji, kukkan! Koyendow dji, djien nédéinhey chon! yaño Kpwon-étan.

Akponlloe voe tchpa toe ttsindjô noet sétpèdallik yu nizjit ttset tchojié. Voe l'en tsell ttô-djiddhankli, khédhétik. Nan tpan kkpagoe ttset dhéjié, ézjionhon kuttchin èlloe yetpèdhelpa kwottset tchojié. Nan tpan kkpagoe, voe kkàon tchugullu è voekonlli, pay dathakº kédhétik. Schi kpwa gwopat nétédiñanen yu, nétchi.

Akpon néttschiw ttsindjô ttset kwèhen-ahal, tpen ven gwottsen yéttset tpèdhelkik yu, yé tchi kèwopè nan kkpagoe dhéhén tinttcho, olltllet. Néttschiw ttsindjô tchi-pè pañikkiédhantcha kuyu: kukkan è neytendè. Néttschiw athen kunkpat tpelkik gwopat, ttsindjô ètoeodhendjik, yé tchi-ttien kkedhanpdha, yu, yédhelpen, andow-kkiedh pénitpien, yattchô, yéhoel', kodathakº yekkè kwanshet.

Anzjoe gwottsen néttschiw tpion konlli gwottset nakkènahig gwopat, tchion égwahén, tpuviñen, èlloe ninidhet, kodhindjik.

Kpwon-étan akpon shan kédhidik yu, voehet pahan bunkpat tsoedhétal kuzjin. Nakan tsell yéttsindjô yépa yinanzjié gwopat, shan tchojié. Kottsendow Dindjié ttset

ρan nidhéjié yu, tρaĕn kkénantρié yu ñikkaon dzjin tṣodjil aykkénantρié ttogoρall, tiyékki kρonkit zjin ρénidhéjié.

Ttsiñaρan kwizjin tiyklen dhidié: yoeρè négutankllet, kρwon tsell kudjokkin konkkit, kρwon nitschié tchatsen, kuyu nétchi dindjiéjyu. Yendow akρon ttṣiñaρan, ρdha, tchojié yu. Dindjié kρet vaño:

– ¸Soe kρwon gwottsen l'at tchρô ρaïnttay, tchovè attṣi, tiño, tinégutizjig. Tchidi tokonttcho?

Dindjiékρet tchugullu gρa gottset kitchillkiek. Kρwon-étan kρwon zjié netchi kkékhinantρié, kukkan và etiñitoedhet.

– Nitsontsédé gwottsen nininzjié? kiyaño.

Siétρè-khédhotchil yu, ñittschien-voeρa nitchotchil vitschien. Yoettset ñankwodh nikkédhotchil:

– Tchootindè dindjié ñilli? kiyaño.

Akρon Kρwon-étan éñédha nèdhizjié yu. Dindjié datρow tchidhankiek. Dindjié ttsenhan tchojié. Akρon:

– Akρonlloe, djugu-ρay l'aon kodathakº kρwon étan dindjié dhil'i: eygwoρat Kρwon-étan ¸soe tṣaño, kuño. Akρonlloe eykuttchin ρàh kwéttchin.

Koyéndow ρay, voe tt'sindjô unkρat nétchojié. Nakantsell yéρa yinanzjié gwoρat, gwottset kétρidik Dindjié llen ρàh. ñil'un kρatitsitoevè schi détan kenlloe, dindjié ttset ñankwodh: kukkan Nakantsell étρilldji, nézjié tchojié. Eygwoρat zjé tchatsen, anzjoegoe nidjen tṣékwéttchin, kotρanna tṣénidhatchié.

Nizjit nénézjié yu, an nizjit dhéhen yu: ρan ttset yatag nan ñankwodh tétizjik. Kρwon-étan schian vizjit tétillik. Nan kotρowdhéjiéyu, yétièh l'at konllen tρenven tthey l'at konllen, yatazjé ρaédjil', kkénantρié. Tρenven ttset ninézjié, nan kwozjié noegwit sittchen. Nan kwozjié nététschiw.

Voe ttṣindjô tsow tédhelhin, yoeρé ninézjié, tṣowllé tédhindjek, akρonttè yaño:

– Noe tazjié kρet niunkρat nikitchodjil. Noe tazjié kρet kkuvet natchétρatchρak, akρon schi nuρun ñaindjit, yaño.

Yaño, akρon, vàdhoeshthen l'édhanttiedh tedho ttogoρall. Yétièh zjé kllen, vitschit-nétoetanday, ttsindjô étchégéρdhey ninédenhè, ékké dakay tthey néodhendjik; akρon tchinédhéjié yu, voe ttsoedé tta nénilli, voe dindjiéju éñaïnllé. Akρon édétan:

– Siàh tinihyin! yaño Kρwon-étan. Kukkan tt'sindjô:

– É tédhiño! yaño, ttṣiñaρan il'i, ¸soe kρwon kρwa, zjionhon-tρet djiñño, yaño gwoρat. Kρwon-étan étoevoetédhindja yu. Vàh kuttchin yeρé nègudjankllet, khottset tchojié.

– Dji lloe étchégéρdhey nu wétazjié kρet kiéttsa nuρwàh dheltsen, kuño.

Etchégéρdhey tinllé ttiet téoendjik akρon naρdhey ttset tédizjik, étchégéρdhey voe l'at tinttcho, l'at nitschié tinétizjik. Ttρotchédi l'at kkakhinatρié akρon ey étchégéρdhey tinllek, ño, tdha kkρagoe.

ñikkaon, gwottset nétchotchil, kokkρadh. Dindjiékρet nan kwozjié négwititttchen kwottsenhan nitsotchil.

Kρwon-étan voett'sindjô vaño:

ñikkaon, kové allkρen dji, takon tiño ll'édji, noetoezjiék et noekuño, vadènday tρèlla: akρon ¸si lloe nitsontsédé étchidzéjé kkaon djiño ll'édjj, ¸si lloe tittcho yéniunzjit. ¸Soe ttset tchinhey, yaño.

Akρonlloe ρdha L'atρatsandia dhétchiyu Nakantsell nakρenkρet kokon, ttsoedé inl'agzjé voettiet khinidhatchié yu, édétan voe tthèlloe ttiet tlagokkwa kodhénantchit. Akρon kove allkρen akρon, takon tiño tthek: iyaw! iyaw! tiño. Akρon ρanttset ttsindjô tlagokkwa vizjit ttsoedé ñittséallttiédh voellé gwottset, utoeρadheltchi. Nakantsell kρet dhelρen, voe dindjiéju ttset tchidhajié yu, yékkitchojié ttset tédizjik.

Akρonlloe yétièh négwititttchen, tidzji élloekρwa, schian ttiet tidzji kuñanéintchit; akρon yétièh kit ṣotchil. L'atρat sandia ndjow konllen kwotρèt Dindjié kkidhéjié.

Akρonlloe Kρwon-étan voe ttṣindjô néodhindjek yu, kρonkkit kρwon tsell ey kwézjin kudjokkan, ey kρwon tsell ρakuttchétégwanhi. Voe ttṣindjô kwizjin kukkan tsendja nizjin gwoρat, ñizjigo voeρayit sazjié.

Schin tρet, ñil'oedoe ñen l'oetρè khoedhahè yu, yétièh ttset nikhenilli yoenétρantchek kunkρat; ρanttset dji ñen tchi nitschié ttset tinétizjik. Djugu kkèlloe voe konlli tρétllé ttset. Tchi tchρô buzji.

Koyendow ttset, tchion ttset vitt ¸si ρah voedindjié nischitanklo, ttsoevi tchρô téklla zjit yetchindhanklu. Kwotlen nétchillkiek, nizjit kρwa kwottset nétchitizjié. L'atρatsandia nidjen atṣéyu, Kρwon-étan yaño:

– Yendow dji, ¸si khii naρudenday-tρella, yaño. L'eyttsen-ennahi vunkρat nétρeysia, yaño. Kottsendowé nétṣétpédanllik yu, Dindjié unkρat tchojié, Dindjié llen él'adoe-nikhénidjia ttset-tillé.

Kottsendowé, anzjoegoe tthey voe hèt kkèlloe voeρayitṣajié, tchion tchρô ven zjig ézjionkρet yéρa yikhetajié étρilltchi. Ey ttogoρall joe Dindjié unkρat tchojié. Tρen ven ninézjié yu, ttṣiñen nakρen kidhotié dètchρan kwozjeg, kuρàh tiñanttchi inl'ag vi kii unkρat kkénantρié, kukañahi. Kéégwahan tsotchil yu ttsiñen kpet yéttschié ttset nitoel'éñahi, van tchρô voekllen èlloe détchρan konllen, l'eyttsenhan voe tllet kρwa, nidjen ttchen tiñanttchi vikii kkanantρié gwoρat, kunkρat yénidhen, ρanttset ttṣiñen sié ttset tédizjik, ¸sié kkaon kakpédohó van tchρô koetρôwkoedhohó yu, kwotlen dindjié kenlloe, tiñanttchi zjandhalρen.

Akɒonlloe Kɒwon-étan Nakantsellɒen ninézjié yu, kkɒay zjié dhidié, voe het unkɒat kuñayin. Akɒon L'atɒatsandia ɒateyta, ɒanttset yékkanatɒié yu ñikkion tchitadhek yu, ñikkion-ttset kuñahyin, akɒontté tédihi lloe, kkɒay zjié tiyendé voe gutéttchen gwoɒat lanval'i: Akɒonlloe: – Soe dindjié tinttcho, yénidhen gwoɒat, ttsendjo tchion inzjien kuyu, yéttsen dhantsen.

Akɒon Nakantsell zjé dhidié, yettset tɒè-tchillkiek yu:

– Tchidiɒadé tchion tɒéïnkllet? yaño.

– Akɒon ttchi ṣoendé ttogoɒalljoe, tchion zjit kudhillɒè ɒàh til'é, yaño.

Akɒonlloe Nakantsell: Il'éhen tiño, yénidhe, toe zjé gwottset nétchitik. Kɒwon-étan lloe vàh kuttchin ttselloe tɒét zjan-né gutankllet kuttset nédhéjié yu, tɒen ven viné ténikitchoédh, tɒion nitschié kɒwa kénidhen yéven viné-tṣotchil. Kkatchaten nakɒen djootɒin dzjin kkit van tchɒò ven tṣenidhadjié yu, ettsendow Dindjié han nikiyondijia Nakantsell voe tchiakɒet ttset.

L'atɒat sandia tsow kkit dhidié yu, kuté-guñahi tséïndja. Voe kɒèɒaëdikiedh, voe kɒèkkéñitcha gwoɒat:

– Eɒoe, tiño, soe kɒè voetɒaneykɒey, tiño. Etchégéɒdhey oëndjik yoe kɒé ṣié tinétizjik yu tchitchidhijié. Voe dindjié yaño:

Noe tazjiékɒet ñunkɒat nikiyondijia, kuɒè schi è voe konlli. Etchégéɒdhey dindjié ñaïntchit yu:

– Ṣi kki tchinhey! dindjiéju yaño.

– Tè djinño? è tédhiño. Kwézjin il'i, akɒon soe kɒè kodathakº ɒaedikiedh, yaño. Kové allkɒen silloe, dindjié kkaon tsotchil: titchinhè konllen. Kodathakº zjié ttset dindjié dhelɒen, Kɒon-étan Nakantsell voe tchiakɒet hankoenattchet. Nakantsell voe tchɒa ey tchɒan dhelɒen. Chwon tédhelyin, akɒon kukkan yédhelɒen yu, ninidhet. Voe dheyja kokon schi kwizjé tanchet, yoe tschien ñittséanchil, yoe ttsig onhan-tɒé-dhillkllet, yunné détchɒan kkɒag yoe thell zjit nathey, yoe zjé-llé kwikkion nékléyédhidié ttset-tédizjik: yé tchiɒé dhelschiuk, yoe tchi dhelklè. L'atɒatsandia nédhindjek akɒon nétchojié.

Kottsendow Nakantsell:

– Voe ntɒalsha! yénizjit: kukkanjoe chwon tédhelyin, kutenhen tthey, kuchsi tthey, kukkié tchɒan ñizjigo ñil'oekékkié gwoɒat, ñikkion étoekhédhanyin.

Kɒwon-étan lloe cheg koyenday, schin zjin yédhelɒen, ño.

(9:199-213)

The Man Without Fire

Kɒwon-étan, the man without fire, and the *Nakkantsell*, or the Pygmy, were quarrelling over a beautiful woman called *L'atɒa-tsandia*, she whom everyone tries to steal from the other.

Nakkan-tsell had many soldiers, all as small as himself, who were slaughtering the relatives of *Kɒwon-étan*.

Kɒwon-étan likewise commanded many followers and had killed all the Pygmies in battle. Thus it happened that the two rivals were the only survivors of their armies and fought on alone, each trying to kill the other.

One day, as the general fighting continued, the beautiful woman, *L'atɒa-tsandia*, the cause of this rivalry, hidden behind the entrance to her tent, gazed with great attention through a crack in the tent at what was happening without, for, on the plain, a host of men were fighting each other to the death over who should have her. Shod in snow-shoes, they were rushing upon one another.

Kɒwon-étan had already killed his brother, and was resolved to do great slaughter amongst his other rivals. In pursuit of each other, the warriors arrived at the bank of a river which *Kɒwon-étan* crossed. But his younger brother had crossed it before him and his damp snow-shoes became coated with such a thick layer of ice that they grew very heavy. The warrior stumbled and fell and *Kɒwon-étan* caught up with him and killed him.

The only son of the Stranger without fire had climbed the steep slope of a mountain and hidden there, for fear that his father might slay him also. *Kɒwon-étan* pursued him, armed with a cutlass, and sat on the mountain-side, his son beside him.

"My descendant," he said to him, "I am cold: light a fire and give me your mittens to warm my hands." For he had come without his fire-stone and carrying a brand which he had dropped in the snow, so that he was now half-frozen, bemoaning his dead brand and forgotten fire-stone.

His son took pity on him. He gave him his mittens, cut and piled wood and set it alight. Then *Kɒwon-étan*, warm again, seized his cutlass and drove it into the bowels of his only son, and threw him from the rock. Then he said to the mountain:

"At the summit of the high mountain, I have sacrificed to you, before the beginning, a choice victim, which I have sent to you. What have you done with him? "

After this misfortune, *Kɒwon-étan* went back down to his tent where he found his brother's widow. For, after the latter's death, the Man without fire had taken her as his second wife.

Crouching in the snow with her face to the ground, she was wailing because the nerve of her foot had been strained and had contracted. She was the mother of a little dog which her husband had given to her, for she belonged to the Dog-People.

Kρwon-étan then said to her:

"Mistress, tell me a story, an interesting one."

"Ah! the nerve of my leg has contracted" said she. "I am in great pain. I have lit a fire in the tent for you. What more do you want? "

The Stranger Without Fire grew angry.

"Mistress, I am going to sleep," he said to her. "Be off, and take your dog with you. Even if your son cries, I never want you to come back here again."

The wretched girl arose, took her dog, and went a long way off, she, the wife of her brother! She walked along, weeping and pressing the little dog to her heart. Thus she went on a long way through barren country where no trees grew, seeking a people who would not kill her and her dog. All winter long she wandered in a wilderness where no path was to be found. At last, having nothing to sustain her and at the end of her strength, she lay down to die, with the dog beside her.

Suddenly, a wolverine (some claim it was a white wolf, *Pèlé*) ran up to her. It shook her and pulled at her hair. She did not move. This wolverine had come from the banks of a stream. At last, its shaking roused the woman from her torpor. She defended herself, throwing a stone at the wolverine which struck it on the neck and killed it. Thus she provided herself with meat.

Then, following the animal's tracks, she found the river and drank her fill. She was saved.

After these happenings, the Pygmy once more stole the wife of *Kρwon-étan*, so that the latter was once more obliged to set out to win her back. But, this time, he was alone. As he went on, he found that the track he was following showed signs of being ever more recently made. At last, it was apparent that it dated only from the day before. But the camp he reached was deserted. Only an old woman was there, sitting beside a very small fire, for she always had a small fire in reserve.

To warm the Stranger Without Fire, the old woman built up a blazing fire, near which the traveller fell asleep. When evening came, the old woman went to tell the people amongst whom the Man Without Fire had come of the latter's arrival.

"A great wonder has befallen me" she said to them, for fear that they might blame her, or in pretence of not recognizing her husband; "from my fire, small as it is, a great cloud of smoke has arisen. Come and see what has happened."

All the people ran at once to the spot and saw *Kρwon-étan* awake, but lying amidst the burning brands which he had divided in two.

They split into two bands and, unknown to him, surrounded him, surprising him in this strange position.

"What manner of man are you," they said, "and where do you come from? To which race do you belong? "

Kρwon-étan arose, leapt from the fire and, breaking through the human circle, said to those people:

"I am a Stranger Without Fire, Without Home. I have been travelling all winter, wandering here and there; this is why I am called *Kρwon-étan*."

"Stay with us," the people said to him. And he agreed to their request.

I must correct myself: it was not until a year later that *Kρwon-étan* went in search of *L'atρa-tsandia*, who had been carried off by *Nakkan-tsell*. But he took an army with him, for the Pygmy had many soldiers.

While on the march, his army fell prey to famine while the country of the Pygmies was still far distant. They came to a sea whose shores are barren and treeless, and continued round it for twenty nights without meeting a living soul.

At last they sighted a mountain far in the distance. But by his magic powers the Man Without Fire brought it near at hand and, by the same powers, crossed over it, for it was shrouded in black smoke, so thick that it hid the sky and floated over the sea.

Beside this sea lived the Pygmy troglodytes. They lived under the ground. The stranger entered their caves but did not find his wife: she had gone to cut and collect wood up the mountain. *Nakkan-tsell* was not there just then, either.

Kρwon-étan went into the forest and met his wife; as he seized the end of the tree she was carrying on her shoulder, he said:

"Wife, your kin have come to take you back, but they are hungry for we have fallen prey to famine. Give us meat therefore." So saying, *Kρwon-étan* drew his flint knife and made cuts in the flesh of his thighs.

L'atρa-tsandia returned to the underground village without saying a word to anyone. She went inside her dwelling, searched and found pemican and pats of fine lard, scooped them all up into her blanket and returned to give them to her husband.

"How I have longed to see you again, o my wife! " said *Kρwon-étan*, "and what happiness it will be to possess you again! "

"Hush, hush," she said. "I am old and the fire of my passion has burnt low."

The Stranger therefore did not insist upon more intimate relations. He returned to his followers who were encamped not far off and said, offering them the pemican:

"Here is a loaf of meat and lard from the daughter of your people! " He held the food on high, but the pemican dissolved between his fingers and gave out a vast cloud

of smoke. It is said that that loaf was the cause of the black smoke he had seen from the plain, covering and obscuring the mountain.

The next day, they were on the march again and reached the underground villages. *Kpwon-étan* had already told his wife: "If tomorrow morning at dawn you hear the cry of the white grouse, you will know that your fellow countrymen have come to deliver you. And the cry of the screech-owl will direct you to the spot where I shall stand. Run to me then."

Thus, when evening came, *L'atpa-tsandia* lay down between her two Pygmy husbands. They slept all three under the same blanket, and *L'atpa-tsandia* had hidden a flint knife in her natural parts. When the dawn streaked the sky – the usual hour for a surprise attack – a ptarmigan's call was heard: "*Iyaw! iyaw!* "

At once the woman slit the blanket from top to bottom with her flint, rose silently, killed her two abductors and ran in the direction of her husband's screech-owl signal. The Pygmies were surprised and massacred.

Then *Kpwon-étan* and his people dwelt on high ground. His people had lost the power of hearing. He restored it to them through his magic powers. They crossed an archipelago from island to island, and the Stranger took back his old wife, though her fire had burnt low. This wife, though old, was flawlessly beautiful, which is why she was constantly abducted.

During the summer, a miraculous event befell the couple. The wife had gone to gather lichen and put it to dry, and her husband was helping her to carry this lichen and spread it out in the sun, when suddenly the lichen changed into a great mountain. It is still seen in the Rocky Mountains chain and is called the "Grande-Montagne" (Great Mountain).

Later, the Stranger Without Fire dragged a man towards the sea, stretched him up against a tall fir tree and bound him to it securely. Then he went a little distance away. His old wife began to weep at this sight, but the Stranger said to her:

"Do not weep, for my son will soon be born again. I am going to see 'He Who Sees and Acts Both in front and behind! " Then he went away, weeping, and gathered a great band of warriors from amongst his people.(1)

Shortly afterwards, his beautiful wife was stolen from him again. The abductors disappeared towards the sea, as they had the first time. *Kpwon-étan* set out in search of them and reached the shore, where he found two young men sitting under a tree, and an old man looking for his son. As soon as they saw the old man, they hid to spy on him as he approached. The latter reached the great lake, whose shores are barren and which extends beyond the sight of man in all directions. Then the two young men changed themselves into bears and, walking as those animals do, crossed the great lake, changed back into human form and killed the old man.

(1)This paragraph is obscure. The narrator, unable to remember further details, could not clarify it.

Meanwhile, *Kpwon-étan* reached the dwellings of *L'atpa-tsandia's* abductors and hid within a thick bush, the better to spy upon his enemies. Suddenly, his wife appeared and began to look carefully all around the scene. Suddenly, she saw her husband's eyes gleaming through the branches of the bush.

"It is a man, a rescuer hidden there," she thought.

To show him that she had noticed him, she drew water and threw some on the bush as a signal, but hiding her purpose from any onlooker.

The Pygmy, who had been in the tent, ran towards her: "Why should you throw water in such a way? What does this mean? " he asked *L'atpa-tsandia* jealously. "The mosquitos are eating me alive, and I am chasing them off," she replied. So *Nakkan-tsell*, believing her words, went back into the tent.

Kpwon-étan then returned to his warriors who were hidden in the forest as he had the first time, and told them that he had found his wife again, but that she was closely guarded and that they would have to fight to win her back. They therefore resolved to make their way around the lake. But they had not realized how vast a lake it was, for they journeyed for twenty days and camped for twenty nights before they came upon the Pygmies once more.

When they arrived, *L'atpa-tsandia* was sitting at the door of her tent, swinging her feet and waving them without pause, like an idiot; for her poor feet were worn with old age, torn and sore.

"Aunt," said she to another old lady, "my feet are torn and sore." The old woman put a cake of ground meat and soft lard on her feet and they were healed and restored. Then the wife went to meet her husband. *Kpwon-étan* again said to her:

"Your countrymen have come to deliver you, but they are without food. First, give us something to eat."

L'atpa-tsandia gave him pemican, or ground meat with soft lard.

"Follow me into the forest," he said to her, "I need you."

"What are you saying? " she replied. "Do not speak that way, for I am old and my feet are torn."

The Stranger Without Fire then returned alone to his warriors; but next morning, as the sky lightened they rose up to fight, and slew great numbers.

Kpwon-étan killed all the Pygmies and, as their Chief was not there, fought long with the latter's younger brother, but could not overcome him. At last, however, he laid him low, drove his knife behind his collar bone and slit his body down its entire length, thus killing him. He pulled out his enemy's entrails and scattered them on the ground. He impaled him on a sharp stake like an animal, hoisted him to the roof-top, but not before he had scalped him completely.

Then *Kpwon-étan* took back his wife *L'atpa-tsandia* and returned to his own land. As for *Nakkan-tsell*, the chief of the Pygmies or Little-Enemies, the Stranger Without Fire still strove to vanquish him, but could not do so. Their stone axes, flint knives and arrows always met blade to blade, point to point. They therefore fought no more, and *Kpwon-étan* lived long afterwards, until old age claimed him in death, we are told.

(Told by *Sylvain Vitoedh*, in 1870, at Fort Good Hope).

(11:43-55)

5º L'en-akpey

Dindjié ñendé-kottlé, Kpwon-étan buzji, voe tchpa tthey, tpenven koenidjahè. Nakpen ñittset kidhéttschié gwopat, voe tchpa dhitchiyu, vi yondé ttchek tchpò dhantsen, kwozjié niñantchi, tsendjakllazjit ñischitanklo, tchion tchpō kkpagoe ndow voe tchienellthey.

Dindjié-détchpantpian étela, il'a yu tpiéditchig nitschié tpet éla. Akponttégunttcho, éguschiklig nidjendé neñinttag.

– Si tchey, siat tchidi tpè-invia, yaño. Yèpè tchi nédhévi yu, vittschié ttset tepdha tinétizjik. Etéla ttchon, djigundiégu, tchiontchpō ven tpohyil' voedétchpan tpian.

Chwon patchitihey ttogopall, zjiow nantlé:

– Soe kkpagoe klla ñanpash, yaño dindjié. Akponttè tétihin ttchon, chwon tinllek. Tsiégu nantlé tthey. Yoe klla apash, akpon èlloe dindjiépé tizjin konlloe, zjion étan tchojié.

L'en-natpaën égudéttchen, ey gwottset tchojié, dzjan tédhéhen, voe détchpantpian kokkpag tédheltpin; détpin kkpag èttié llen tédhitllé, inl'agzjey téodhindjek, kukkan joe tsen tchelltsen gwopat, chwon yaha, néyétchillhen, tpadéttsek gwopat.

L'en-tpaën kkénellkpek yu, pa tchpō zjit chwon kétik, akpontté kédhétik lloe. Sheg voe dhôw ñittuïnttchig tédhelschiw, nédhititli yu nittag. Zjé-konllen kkénantpié, ttsiñen tchittschiet nekpag vizjit ttset-tétiyin kuñahi.

– Soe ñen-dhôw! kuño zjanezel' pàh. Akponlloe sheg-dhôw nédhititli yu kadjoekelkpen. Nidjendè dindjié ttset nénizjié yu:

– Nupun lloe è dindjié dhipey, khiyaño, nupwàh kwinttchin. Chwon dindjié tétillik gwopat nidjen kwéttchin Dindjié.

Ey dindjiékpet tpendjidheyttset l'en, tpendjidheyttset dindjié konlloe.

Tséttchin kon kit dhidié, ttset tchojié. Voe klet l'enklet yèllen, voe kpé tchpan.

– ñité-inhey, pétpoen! kiyaño.

Dindjié llen yoe ttset tpékhédhétal.

– Si lloe siàh ñité-tpa-ha! kuño dindjiékpet, ñiténidhéjié, klô-adhoedh voeñatsintchit, tsénidhatchié, kukkan. L'en-akpey èlloe kidhotchié. Eïakpon édétan dzjin nakpen dhotchié gwopat, dindjiékpet zjanatsétthek:

– Atsina! χey! χey! Atsina! χey! χey! Ninidhet khénijit ttogopall, zjanatsé, panttset édétan napudenday kkétagunttcho.

– Nupwet kkiregwilhen kuño. Khè-ndé tchitpelndjia zjit, éñédhago tsoekinidhajié tinégutizjik.

Akponlle veydzé athen khétiyin, khitpè nitsidhizjit; veydzé nakpén dètchpan kkpag, tédhôtié, l'en inl'eg khittse pazjié.

Khitpènidhazjit tégutizjik yu:

– Via kupwet téteyklla, tiño. Athen-kpet nakpen èlloe kokonlli gwopat, khitétsoetattchi. Via tédhikli, L'en-akpey, ttsoevi-llè voeydzé pah tédhikli.

– Akpon nidjen ñanhè! pétpen kiyaño. Athen kunkpat kwinttchin, pétpen tchotli yu, nidjen nellhè, via kadhendak. Kukkan athen nak en élloekpwa, tpédjikeydhèt.

– Athen nakpen kkanintpié kudjin? kiyaño.

– Akpwa! kuño. Ttséttchin voehet enlloe:

– Athen, chwon otséïndjik, tiño, ñiidjil. Akpon veydzé nakpen tchpan kkit tédhotié kkanantpié yu, pétpen gwottset tchojié. Kkié zjit voe tpon éñinthey, inl'eg lloe détchpan ñéyttsenaschi kozjé vi tchi inhey; inl'ag lloe voe ninthéyu, nédhétik. Voe ttsindjo yé ttschien-ttset tpénidhazjit.

– Ah! athen étpihey, voe kllen kwottset ñankak! yaño. Kwottset tchilkiek. Inl'ag lloe tpoenaltthet alshen, ninidhet. Inl'ag lloe koënday ñité-dillnen, ttsindjô dhidié yu, veydzé néñinttagu yé étso kkeynantschit gwopat, ttsindjô ninidhet. Nétsotchil. Akpon pay kodathako L'en-akpey pàh kwettchin hattchen.

pay nigunijit, schi kpwa.

– Veydzé yétchi nodowdhet kiréyontohô, athen étan tittcho, khuño. Akponlloe tsotchil ttsi ttiet, tpèkoledé ttset kétchotié yu, yahan klô tchion kkpagoe khavia. Dji klô tchpan athen khétiyin. Kwoté tsokpé, kkié zjit tsattag, yatag nan kkaon nétsotchil, yathen, athen tpet kolli, khetchpankohô, kodathako kkié zjit tsedhapè. Tpen ven patoetselttié ttsindjokpet ttchi ketitillik, étschiégoe llen ll'ezji tpetseltschiw; akpon schi konllen.

L'en-akɒey nizjié ɒatchi-yondidjia, yụ, kunatɒagoettset étschieg tchitɒénelldjia tinétizjik. Ey gwoɒat teyzjé kékudjokkan, étschieg tidjokkin. ɒètɒen chwon ttset tétihi. Ey gwoɒat L'en-akɒey yéttset zjan-altschié.

– Djien noe nan kɒwa. Onhan tchinhey! ɒétɒen khiño. Kkinédhézjié ttchon, shan nétchojié.

ɒanttset ñittset-ndétittcho nazjié, yoe kké-tédhéjié, athen nanéhey. Voe hey l'eyttsé voe tchi konlli, voe hey ttien chsi tchɒô ɒaïndjiw. Voe hey kwoté natathey yu, dhidié. Athen llen dindjié yékunilli.

– Djaɒadé ʂoe kké-tchin-hey? yaño.

Voe then èlloekɒwa gwoɒat, dindjié yoe antlôgu:

– Djaɒàdè ʂoe ñitla? yaño. Dindjié îl'i gwottsen èlloetthey zjionhè-ɬɒet nillzjié, tiño ñittset-ndétittcho.

Voe ʂian zjé chsi ɒaïndjiw, djiño, ey show-ta-dahé yu, chsi ttiet ekkɒè teyɒè l'èdhanttiedh; athen llen yéñaïnllé.

– Tankɒè tɒadh tlen, anzjoegoe dindjié éɒilldji, ll'édji, yaño, athen inl'ag dhanɒen, akɒon tchugullu tischien ttset tchiinhey, ya ño ñittset-ndétittcho. Akɒonlloe nétɒidik.

Kwentledh kunidha. Eygwoɒat kkèlloe. L'en-akɒey ɒàh kwéttchin, dindjié.

Akɒon L'en-akɒey noekɒag zjit ttset tétiyin. Inl'ag:

– Akɒonlloe, dindjié tchelltsen! tiño. Akɒon ttsiñen l'en nillétchidhitindjik, ey tthey:

– Ey! teytsen tchelltsen! tiño. Akɒonlloe Dindjié ñittset-ndétittcho:

– ʂi chsi billi teytsen tchelltsen! khiyaño. È zjionhè nillzjié, tiño. ɒanttset kodathakº L'en-akɒey dhelɒen.

Akɒon ɒétɒen L'en-akɒey kwéɒen nénizjié yu, dindjié kɒwa. Kodathakº ninidhet. Eïakɒon Atsina L'en-akɒeytchugullu ttschiéttset tchojié yu, shey-dhôw-hèk néodhendjik voezjiazjié, ñittsetndetittcho akɒontté yaño.

– Kanédété tchɒô ndowttset nizjit ñittié ll'édji: Eɒatchɒan ɒaïnhè! djinño tɒella, yaño. Akɒonlloe Atʂina ñen-dhow zjiazjé yu tchion-tchɒô kkɒag tiñanen. Nizjit neñinttag, ey gwoɒat nan èlloekɒwa.

– Tɒeytchia ll'èdji! yénijit yu, ey gwoɒat:

– Chey-ndjô ɒainhè! tiño. Akɒon ɒanttset tchion kkɒag chey-ndjôw konlli, voe kket dhotchié. Akɒon tthey nizjit kkèlloe néñinttay yu, akɒon tɒeytchia! yénijit yu:

– Eɒatchɒan ɒaïnhè! tiño. Eïakɒon nogwaɒattset éɒatchɒan tɒiontchɒô kkit ɒaïnhè, voe kket tédhotié yu, néanzji.

Anzjoegoe gottsen viyondè onhan yoetɒatchi yéllen, ey gwottset néñittié. Vi yondé ttʂi zjit tsontl'ik éñoka. Akɒon kanedété vi yondé l'eyttsè-tiñottag yu, éñidhago ñittié. Vi yondè-tchiɒè oëndjig:

– Ah! sitchɒa, viyondé yaño, noen tininyin akɒonlloe! ʂié het inl'ag noe ñaintchit, yéñishen! yaño.

– Akɒwa! yétchɒa yaño. Nan-zjié-enlén nidjendé vi yondè dhelɒen. Tchion zjit yé tchi-ɒè tédhindjek, tchion zjit yédétilloe, yédhelɒen. Viyondè tchiñanen.

Ey kwotlen, nidjendé vi yondè toehet nakɒen kidhotié, gwottset tchojié yu, tchi-tag ɒadhéjyé yu, tdha kkit zjé kwéhen, ttʂindjô nakɒen kidhotié.

– Ehet kɒet, kiyaño, ʂi lloe ʂoe sheg-dhôw-hèk zjit, dji nan kkɒag ne ʂatidilloellik. Akɒonlloe nan kkɒag dindjié akɒwa, tiño.

Akɒonlloe kokon dhotié, khiɒè schi kɒadanhi. Inl'égoezjé voe kkɒag klô konlli; inl'aglloe voe kkè dhivi. Dindjiéyu ttsèlloe hankutsilloe yèllen. Tsénidhatchié yu dindjiéjyu kukon nidhatchié, kuɒwet dhotchié. Inl'ag vi kii konlli. Dindjié shoeg-ttétchɒan dakay yàh ttagu ɒaéñinthey gwoɒat. Inl'ag tthey akɒontétihi.

Akɒonlloe inl'a ñizjiétchojié dindjiéjyu, elltɒin tchɒô tɒèyoenédhanɒedh yu, yoekɒè-ttchadé dhèha, voe akɒeyshatɒall odhendjik, tchion ttset tɒènidhalχiw nidjen yédhelɒen, ninidhet. Ey elltɒin lloe vi yondè tinttcho lanval'i.

(9: 213-224)

The Dog-foot People

A man with two wives, named *Kɒwon-étan,* lived with his younger brother at the water's edge. These two brothers had quarelled, so the elder, while his younger brother slept, made a trough of wood, placed his brother in it, bound him securely, put a lid on the trough and flung it into the sea.

The box floated, buffeted by the rough waves. A gull saw it and flew quickly towards the strange object. The man bound within the trough said:

"Daughter, swim before my coffin."

The gull began to swim and the waters grew calm. Then the coffin sailed peacefully along and ran aground on the opposite shore.

But the man, bound as he was, could not get out of the coffin. Then a white wolf ran up to the box.

"Brother," said the man, "gnaw the bonds which hold me captive."

The wolf tried, but could not do it. A marten came, and gnawed the cord so well with its incisors that the man was freed from his bonds and climbed out of his coffin.

He walked along a path that none but dogs had followed and beaten. Here there was a trestle, on which the Stranger placed his wooden trough. On this trestle there was also venison, rich spoils of animals killed in the hunt. He took a fat piece of rump, but it stank of dog droppings so that he could not eat it and pushed it away because of its foul smell.

Following the trail worn by dogs the Stranger found himself surrounded by thick darkness and could advance only slowly. Then he came across the feather-decked remains of a great white eagle, hanging beside the path. He seized it and clothed himself as in a garment, to help him along his way, and flew towards a village which he could see from high up in the air. In the middle of the village, children were playing.

"Look, there is my robe of white eagle feathers! " they shouted when they saw the Stranger descending towards them. They hurled themselves upon him and pierced his white eagle's skin robe in a hundred places.

However, the Stranger went towards the adults of these people who said to him:

"We do not kill anyone. Stay with us."

For a long time, he refused their offer, but at length he agreed to stay with them.

Those people were half dog, half human. In the tent to which he was taken, he found a beautiful and nubile young woman. The Stranger went towards her and gazed upon her. From the waist down, her body was that of a dog.

"Go in, Stranger," he was told.

A great crowd of people ran forward and quarelled over possession of the traveller.

"I and I alone shall have him." "He shall come to my house." Such were the cries of these hospitable people.

The Stranger stayed in the house where the beautiful young girl lived. She offered him haunches of mice to eat. He ate, lay down and slept. The dog-people did not sleep, for they did not know what sleep was.

The Stranger had not risen from his couch for two days, and the dog-people began to lament and intone the funeral chant:

"*Atsina! hey! hey! atsina! hey! hey!* ", for they thought him dead. But he suddenly awoke and said:

"In my dreams I discovered a soporific potion for you."

Onto the fire he threw eyes of the white hare, and at once the Dog-foot people, who never slept, grew drowsy and fell asleep.

Now, the prey of the Dog-foot people was the great white Arctic owl. They hunted these birds with nets. At that moment, two great white owls had just flown down and perched a little distance away.

One of the dog-people went towards them, but after chasing them towards his nets, he came back.

"I shall put up more nets to catch those birds," he said.

But when he returned to the spot where he had seen the two white owls, the birds had already flown away. However, he hung his nets on the trees to catch those plump and delicious birds.

He then returned to the traveller and said to him:

"Now, stay here and watch for those birds, our meat."

Atsina obeyed because he was a stranger, and he kept watch for the owls. But they had flown off.

"Have you seen the two white birds again? " he was asked.

"No," he replied.

The lovely girl who had become his wife added:

"They have flown off, and cannot be caught."

Then *Atsina*, seeing the two owls perched in a tree, went towards them and pierced them with his arrows. One of them hung there, its head caught between two branches. The second was wounded but not killed. The dog-woman saw it escaping and told her husband. *Atsina* ran after it, but the owl got into the tent and attacked the Stranger's wife, doing her such great injury that she died.

Nevertheless, *Atsina* remained with the Dog-foot people all winter long, while famine spread through the land.

"The owls have taken flight," the people told one another, "let us go after them."

Now, in the water they noticed mice swimming. As the mouse is a nocturnal animal, it was also hunted by the Dog-foot, night people, and they hunted it in canoes, killing the mice with arrows.

Then they went back up to high ground where mice abounded, thanks to the complete absence of owls in these high pastures, and they killed them by the score. These great yellow mice were like reindeer to them. They ran all over the plains in large

numbers.[1] The Dog-foot gave them a real chase. They shot them with arrows, trapped them, eviscerated them, the women cut up the meat from them; they were treated as reindeer or elk; their meat was hung above the fire to cure and dry.

But while the people were all away, the meat hung on the buccans fell into the fire, where it was consumed, together with the tents and tools. The dog-people, blaming this misfortune on *Atsina*, said to him:

"This is not your country, depart from us, for you bring us ill fortune."

So, sad and alone and not knowing his way, *Atsina* set forth.

Then he met *Ehna-ta-ettini*, "He Who Sees Both in front and behind," the great hunter with two faces, leading his herd of reindeer. His snowshoes had a curved point behind as well as in front, for he walked both ways; from the back of his snowshoes a keen blade rose up.

At sight of *Atsina*, the man with two faces stopped, planted his snowshoes before him, one on each side, and sat down between them. He promised to give the Stranger many reindeer. But, since he was extremely thin, hardly more than skin and bones, *Atsina* began to laugh.

"Why do you laugh, why do you mock me," said the man with two faces. "Do you not know that in all my life I have never shot a single arrow that missed its mark?"

So saying, he took from between his snowshoes the blade which he had planted there and cut a plump slice from the Stranger's flesh. Through this magic, he produced a great herd of reindeer for him. Then he departed, saying to *Atsina*:

"If in four days you can no longer find any living creature, sacrifice a reindeer to me, and flee far from the trail of the Dog-foot people."

Such were the words said to *Atsina* by 'He Who Sees Both in front and behind'. Now, it was very hot, and *Atsina* remained in the land of night, because of the shade to be found there. The dog-people continued to live in the same way, which is why *Ehna-ta-ettini* decided to visit them.

The dog-people were playing ball in the village square. One of them said:

"I smell human scent."

Then a very small child who was pawing a dog about as a sort of game, said:

"Yes, I can smell human scent, too."

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(1) This is no exageration. Below the Arctic Circle, in springtime, Arvicola fulva, a large, yellow mouse, appears in such great numbers that in the space of an hour, fifty or more can be killed with a stick or simply with the feet. They are strong swimmers.

Suddenly, the Man With Eyes Both in front and behind cried:

"It is my sword which smells of humans, o wretched people! Know that my hunting is always fruitful."

At once he set about them and slew them all.

Atsina was absent. When he returned towards the land of the Dog-foot people, he saw only corpses. There was not a single living creature in the village. So he fled from their trails, found once more the cloak of white eagle's feathers and put it on.

The Man With Two Faces said to him:

"If your eagle feathers carry you too far, cry out: "Log, appear!" *Atsina* promised him this.

Clothed once more in the white eagle feathers, *Atsina* flew over the wide sea. He flew far, and soon land was no longer to be seen. When he thought it time to rest and sleep, he cried:

"Sand-bank, appear!"

At once, a sandy islet arose in the midst of the ocean. *Atsina* flew down to it, rested and slept.

Having gone on his way again, he once more flew a great distance. Wanting to rest and sleep again, he cried:

"Log, appear!"

At once a log arose from out of the sea, and on it he rested and regained his strength.

From there, he flew in search of his cruel elder brother, he who had rejected him and tried to kill him. He found him visiting his nets in his canoe. Then, carried by his eagle feathers, he began to circle above him, and seized his elder brother by the hair.

"What! My younger brother," said the latter, "is it really you? I have decided that it would be a wise act if I were to give you one of my wives."

"I do not want her!" replied *Atsina*.

Then he threw himself upon his elder brother, dragged him to an underground stream and, still holding him by the hair, submerged him until he drowned. Only then did he release the corpse, which sank to the bottom.

Then, *Atsina* went to where his elder brother's two wives lived. These two wives were sisters and lived at the top of a mountain, in a small tent. The Stranger climbed the mountain, entered the dwelling and sat down.

"Wives", he said to the two sisters, "I have just travelled over the entire face of the earth by means of my garment of white eagle feathers. All its inhabitants are dead".

He sat down between them as if he had been their husband, and gave them food. On one of them, there were weasels and on the other, mice, living as parasites.

Atsina rid them of these pests. When night came he slept between them and with them.

Atsina pierced the breast of one of his wives with the quill of one of his white feathers, and she conceived and brought forth a son, as did the other wife.

But one day when *Atsina* was out hunting, a great pike pulled him into the water, bit the tendon of his heel, and seizing him by the ankle, dragged him down into the river, where he drowned and thus died. This enormous pike was his elder brother, whom he had previously drowned. This is the end of the story.

(Told by *Sylvain Vitoedh*, in 1870, at Fort Good Hope.)

(11: 56-66)

Tṭsiñen nitschié kρwa ttsiñaρan yégwillhen tρenven. Yenidhanschien. Nitschié tinétizjik yu, yendjidhoekloedh ño, ttsiñen, voe ttset athen zjankonlli. Tρadh ètρilldji, akρon ñikkaon athen llen dhelρen, klla zjit. Schian ttiet athen nénanshet, athen ellikkié khidheltsen.

Akρon inl'a tchρan:

– Andow-kkiedh, señaôtchit, dindjié ttset tétiño; kukkanjoe;

– Akρwa! kiyaño. Ey gwoρat atsé ttsiñen, kwentledh atsé, akρontρet tsététillik. Viowhi djon tédhiño:

– Sié zjié kwottset netρinha, yaño. Kukkan zjoe èlloe yoettset ρagenχi.

Tsénidhatchié ttchon, voe hen, viowhi tchρan kokon nidhatchié. Tρadh étρilldji kuttié voe hen atsé. Kwotlen tρadh kunté dhotchié tinégutizjik. Dzjin sié gwottset tchojié akρon, kukkan voe kρwon ñenttay gwoρat voe hen ttset nédhizjié.

ñikkaon, tρadh tinégutizjik voe ttsoedé odhindjék akρon djon tédhiño:

– ñahen, zjé kotéchoet ttset tetòllé. Dhivi-dhôw shoel tétihi, ñittsé anttiedh, zjétig tédhôtschiw, akρon:

– Dhivia-ta ilére-dhôw zjie tsow-kkit tédhotρien, akρon ṣoe l'entsi-tsell tsòwkkit ñankwodh ñischllôkli, tiño. Akρonlloe:

– ñahen, yendow dji, cheg kρwa, ntρôta-tρella, tiño; dji nan kkρag ttchahandiedh llen gwoρat, djien ntρey-ṣichia kρwa ttchon. Tradhsié ttset tρischia. Nidjendè eykρet ṣoetchékokonlloe ṣoekka khoenatρié tρèlla. È tédhoño, otsé chon! Elloe ṣoe ρè otṣé konlli. Akρonlloe voet kρa-ôlttcho dji, athen-khin ñikkian-l'édéñottié, voe tthen kkeytρoe-tρôlschoel chon! Akρon eykρet ṣiet yendji ninôha ll'édji, athen llen konlli tρèlla, kiyaño.

Akρonlloe voe gendjié téitsihyin lloe. Tρadh nivia tsendja kutéy-tṣinitρien, klla zjit, oeta tsow-kkit tétṣitρien, athen-khin l'édénattiedh kovè zjey, è voe kkeyt ṣoetρelshel yu, yendji nitṣohen, akρon l'entsi t'sow kkit ñischitṣoek'i yenlloe.

Akρonlloe tρadh, niviatig l'at nitschié ρaïnttay, ttṣiñen étρilldji, tρadh-sié ttset tchojié. Akρon ṣié tenakkaïn tinékutizjik. Attṣey tchρô zjit akρontρet dindjié kodathako koenidjanttsey, akρontρet kutthoen zjey konlli, dindjie dathakº kikkay-gwendhet, Zhoenan kodathakº (kutρet) noegwitṣottchin) ttṣoevi-llè ttset koenidjanttsey, ttsoevi-llé ttset l'onilloendjik; kuρwathen tchρan kodathakº zjanétρilitchi, ño.

Akρon édétan ṣié gwottset tchojié, oeta nidhitρien lloe, voe shoel' dhivi-dhow tétihi, djiño, l'étadoenakρa, tedhindjek tthey. Akρon ey gwoρat sié zjié oeta oéndjik l'an voe kkiedh; akρon yendiédheyttsen voe l'entsi tsèlloe nédantchi voe kkanatρié

Voeklen, lloe, vàhkuttchin athen-khin zjin kheyha; voe then zjin ñikkion l'édékiñottié, voe tthoen èlloe voe kkey tρoet, sothel. Ekhintthoen kodathakº ontschiw zjié nitṣénenllé. Cheg tρet akρontté khitintteho lloe, athen tṣédhelρen kρwa, tsendja kokwenday. Ekhinttoen yendji nitsénitρien akρon ekhin-tthen naρudenday, ékhin-then kudzjin atṣaha, kiñattcho dhitρin; tchρantchρat atṣaha, kiñattcho dhitρin; tchρantchρat atṣaha, tchρantchρat voe tthen yendji nitsénitρien, tchρantchρat iχen enlloe, tinétizjik.

Akρon nizjit ttset djon kwol'shen. Ettsendow ékhin-then atṣaha kuzjey kotṣoenaltρengwoρat, l'anρà yatṣaha yu voe tthen voe kkey tṣoenel'nen. Ettet. ρan ékhin voe négutitllet kρwa, ño.

(9: 224-228)

The Moon Dweller

Once an old woman found a little baby by the water side and brought it up. When the child had grown, he became very strong and caught reindeer for his adoptive parents by snaring during the night. He killed them by his magic art, and this magic art also made the animals grow fat.

One day he said to his parents:

"Separate the fat of the entrails of the animals I shall bring you."

The ungrateful parents refused. Then the child wept and wailed going from tent to tent. His adoptive uncle then said to him:

"Go back to the sun, whence you came. We have no need of you."

The child was silent, and when night came, everyone went to bed. The strong child lay down, as usual, between his adoptive mother and her husband. However, he disappeared during their sleep, which made his mother weep bitterly. The child had, in fact, gone back to the sun; but as he could not endure the extreme heat, he returned, so that the next day, he was found in the tent once more.

He took his blanket and, before setting off once more, said to the old grand-mother:

"Mother, make your tent fast and firm, for it will be shaken violently this night."

The child wore marten-skin mittens. He tore them in two and hung them at the apex of the tent; then he said to his parents:

"Place marten blood above the door, in a pot, and tie my little white bitch near the door, outside the tent, for soon you will all die. Crimes are festering on this earth, and have become too much for me to bear, so I am going to the Moon; those who hate me will see me there. Hush, do not weep," he added. "there is no cause for weeping. But do as I tell you: when you want to cook meat, cut it up, cut all the flesh from the right shoulder of a reindeer, but take great care not to break the bones. Hang the shoulder-bone outside the tent in the moolight, with all its joints intact. If you do this, I will provide you with a plentiful supply of meat."

Thus spoke the Moon-child. He was obeyed to the letter. When night came, the tent was closed carefully and made more secure, and a pitcher of blood was hung above the door, a shoulder of reindeer cut without breakage or dislocation of the bones, and the flesh roasted and eaten. The little bitch was tied near the door, outside the tent.

Then, during the night, a great cloud of smoke arose from the apex of the tent, but the young magician was seen no more. He had gone to the Moon.

Just then, the moon appeared, pale and wan; a tempest arose which snatched up all human creatures from inside their dwellings; the tents were all empty; all enemies perished and all the *Zhoenan*, or Nation of Prostitutes, who were lived with, were carried up to the top of the fir trees and hung there to freeze; all their animals, too, disappeared.

As to the Child Magician, having taken the marten blood, the torn skin mittens and the little white bitch, he had departed for the Moon, where he can still be seen, holding the pitcher in one hand and the little dog in the other.

After his departure, his parents ate only the right shoulders of the reindeer they killed. They scraped the flesh away without breaking the bones, and placed these bones outside in a bag, and the shoulders grew whole again of themselves.

They did this for a long time, living comfortably without having to hunt or kill reindeer.

When only a shoulder of the reindeer was eaten and the bone left whole, the shoulder flesh grew back again of itself. It was cut again, and again it would re-appear. But the *Dindjié* finally tired of eating only the shoulder flesh, and when they had eaten it, they broke the bones, and then, the shoulder never grew flesh again.

(Told by *Emma Lebeau, Dindjié* woman, in 1870, at Fort Good Hope)

(11: 66-69)

70 Kρon-tρet naχa-tsoetoetal'

Tρa-odellet lloe, sie tteihen dji, akρon ρdha ttset, tρadh edjil'yu, nillen tρétseytcha, ρdha tchatsi, tρètlla-eshtlli zjié nitsoenidjia, kkinatsétoetal', schi nétchitsoeρek, kρontρet siétsétoetal', nétsidjiw kkétagunttcho. Zjé inl'agoezjey ñiteytsédjia yu, zjé kwizjié tsétoetal' schi atsaha, ézjion schi dindjié kodathakº kiyaha. Ey kwotlen ρatsoehè tchρantchρat, ézjion sjé kwottset tsédoeta, katρagoetρet yendjitsoedjiw, akρonρet tsédoetal' kkinétsidjiw kwozjin. Ey ρàh kkié tsoeχa, kétρagoe kkékρaw nakρen vizjit tsaχa, tchétρagoe kkékρaw tankρè ρàh. ρandja kkéρaw tchitchitandja, kuño.

Ey kkéρaw tssey voe kkρag édiñéshoekloedh. Ey zjit tsetaχa yu atsaρa elleg:

– Klag-datha! nan kkétρow ñikkè anashoekρay. Aéxuha!

Sié-zjit-dhidié akρontté nuρwaño ttogoρall joe, titiyin. Schi konllen tρella, gunijit gwoρat, ey kunkρag titiyin.

(9: 229-230)

The Funeral Procession Through the Tents

Consequently, when the snows melt and when there is an eclipse of the moon, then, when night falls, the people grind meat very fine, tie it up in packets, and hoist it onto their backs in game-pouches, and then begin to crawl from tent to tent.

Suddenly, they enter one of the tents furtively, explore every corner of it and eat the meat of those who do not own the tent. This done, they steal out as furtively as snakes and slip into another tent, where the same scene is repeated.

From time to time, they split up into two bands which move back towards one another. Round the tents they go, in a crawling gait. At the same time, two arrows, sometimes four, are struck against one another; these arrows are painted red.

Simultaneously, the following words are sung:

"O yellow mouse, pass quickly above the earth in two passes forming a cross. *Aéχuha!* "

We do this in obedience to *Sié-zjié-dhidié*, the Moon Dweller, who instructed us in this rite before going up into the heavens, in order to ensure us of plentiful game and abundant food supplies.

(Told by *Sylvain Vitoedh*, in 1870, at Fort Good Hope.)

(11: 70-71)

8º Etschiégé

Ezjion-kuttchin Dindjié kρet dhelρen, kutρet ʦoegwelttchin. Zhoenan nan kkaon noegwiʦittchin. Dji kuttchin, ttcha llen ttʦettétihi, intsi tchρan nakaïn tthey, tiñanttcho llen kuρwettsen; kukkanjoe Dindjié kedhelρen ttogoρall.

Etschiégé tchia enlloe yu, ttʦiñaρan yoegwilhen tρen ven, akki-tchien zjié. Akkitschien voe kkρag kkoetρèʦenday vizjit schian ttiet yendjidhoekloedh tρella lanval'i gunidhen. Ey gwoρat Etschiégé tédjitiño. Ttsiñaρan yénidhanschien.

Zhoenan Dindjié ρat kénizjin kρwa gwoρat, Etschiégé ti tchia kρet tiño:

Zhoenan-kuttchin ttset tchididjia, kiyaño. Tʦétenρa, zjié ven ρaʦoetoetal'. Onhanttset nesiégidjattcho gwoρat, athen ezjiel' kwozjié zjin tρé iditlôgu, athen ilérédhôw, kwozjié tthey, eyzjin ρatlôg-tʦeytchet, ρatʦatlôgu tthe ll'èdji.

– Ah! nuρwéketlôgu! kinidhen gwoρat. Ey gwoρat Dindjié kwentledh ttset nésiégidjattcho.

Zhoenan khittset naʦoetèta yu, khiρatlôg-tseytchet tchied étan tétihi yu; l'en tsell tsintè, andjet, voekkèkhiyattcho, khiyaha gwoρat. Ey tthey Dindjié ñazjantchit. Dindjié khiyaha, kukkan Etschiégé yaha èlloekρwa.

Etschiégé Zhoenan inl'ég nizjin kuñinlhiyu: – Ni voezjoegoentρalρa! yéñijit. Ey kunkρat tchojié; ll'édh natchρan énéha péïnhey odhendjig, yékkè dhanchet yu yétchi dhelpdha, yoenan l'atanen; ninidhet Zhoenantchia.

– Akρontté tétinhi gwoρat, Zhoenan kodathakº zjannoetρaldha lanval'i, vàkuttchin kénidhen ttogoρall joe kwenday kρat kitchotchil.

Dindjié nizjin dhelρen tlen, yéhen akρontté yaño:

– Djaρadé ʂi kii akρontté titinyin? yaño. Ttʦiñaρan tétiño, Etschiégé yintsin kkρagoe kwodjanen, han-yoenantchet, dhitρi kkélloe.

Etschiégé ñenttay; kwentlédhoettset yéindji-tankloedh tchρan. Athen-edjivoe ʂiénedjettsen buzji, ey ttiet toechoetinttcho dheltsen. Schian zjit yéindjidhantthet; kukkan djugu toezjien kwikkaon kρwa. Va idenday kρwa. Yéindjitankloedh, kukkan tiyéttset attchô kρwa lloe, èlloe dindjié nanattan tthey. Shan kwéttchin kuzjin, viyéhet nakρen ρàh.

Akρonlloe: Zhoenan kukρat tchojié, djiño, toe heyllé, voe hey-tschi tchρan tthen ñandjow néttchagu ñittschien voeρa, edji kkitinttcho. Akρon Zhoenan-zjé-kukudjotllépè ninézjiéyu, nidjen voe djiédh nanhè. Vi tchi kkρag tssey tschiesh tchρan ñitρet-dhitllé, vi kii Zhoenan-kuttchin néyékhedhet gwoρat, vindé-tchion konllen. Voe tchρa tthey nidjen kwéttchin. Tρadh vàkuttchin tρet ninézjiéyu, tʦétsayin. Akρey-antschiw, kuño, kvopé Zhoenan tchitʦoetρalρdha kwiñidhen, ey ttséttétiyin. Etschiégé Dindjié han kédhétik, akρeyantschiw akρon-tρet koven tchidhankiek, kkañantρié yu, yettset tchojié, yékket tédhihey. Voe het kkρagoe tthen titichiet ρédhitllé, vizjit Zhoenan tρet koven tchidhankied yu, kodathakº Zhoenan dhaρan, kodathakº kuñen ta kwozjin. Akρonlloe: Zhoenan konllen nikhénidhet. Eïakρon nakan llenkρwa ttset tinétizjik.

Akρonlloe: ttsiñaρan, yéhen yenlloe, tchugullu ρédhitié yu, atʦé, kwentledh atʦé; ρah djon tédhiño:

– ʂi kii koenday dji! ʂi kii doénday dji! tiño. Etschiégé yé zjé niténizjié tρet zjin kρwa. Kwozjié ninatρié zjin. Voe hen ye gunanhiw yaño:

– Tchootindè? Eh! ʂi kii, nan titihyin? Dji tρadh kket, nè tchρa kρoakρen antschiw! yaño.

Etschiégé djon yétino zjin:

– ñahen, tchion djidhil'i! Tchion yoetédjankρay, yandjia tlen tchinédhéjié yu. Dindjié han ttset ninézjié, voe hen onhan djantchit. Tʦindjo nakρen odhindjek atenhen, eykρet tthey onhankudjanlloe, voe nivia kétchidi voe han tρa ttsen kρanittséri, ey tchρan onhan djantschiw. Voe tchia kρet Zhoenan-zjékudjotllé kwozjié négwitittchen, kodathakº kottschien ttset l'anρa koel'ékitchodjil'. Zjé kwopè zjan tadhéhen voe kkρagoe toevi-dhôw nizjin llen tédhitllé. Vi tchiakρet kitédhindjek kiρàh ρdha kédhantsen. Akρontté tinttcho lloe, nidjendé atenhen kukρet dhitllé ttchon, akρon gottset kitchodjil'. Nakkan kénidhatchiéyu, ttcha llen, édjittchi nizjin tρet llen-ρanikohi, akρon kottsendow tʦotchil.

Tʦitchodjil yu, ρanttset zjiuguhet tchootin tinttcho tchion kkρagoe péïnhè? ρattʦey tchpô pàh tρiéditchik, tinégutizjik, tρiéditchik tagoettset tadashoel, tchion tégoe ninklet.

– Tρè-ôdjia! Etschiégé vitchiakρet dhiño.

Tρétsédjia. Edétan kozjin tρenven éttiè, voe tρenhen ρàh nan ρaékit, nankkρagoe édidjantρien kitinttcho. Nan-kuttschié-dhéhen, kiño, kotρèklet nanttchet, nan tρènelldji. Zhoenan-kuttchin kodathakº tchinillet; kodathakº tchion khidhelρen; inl'agoe kukkan koenday kρwa.

– Ṣi tchiakρet, djion tchédheyttsen niñodjia! Etschiégé tiño.

– Aha! kiño. Yékket tchodjil'. Kwinzjin-ttset kwotρètsoedata, kodathakº yendiédheyttsen tρékiyendjia.

ρdha tinétizjik, Etschiégé vi tchiakρet tédhiño: – Nan nizjit ttchon; ñankodh ttset tétρoll'a, tiño. Chinoe gwottsen athey tthen-ttchagu ṣoeñaôtchit, tiño. Ekhidatsow odhendjik, voe tthen-ttchagu niñanttay, l'épwatρoenantcho, tchitchidhandjia kuyu nidhatchié.

– Dji ôha chon! kiyaño. Akρonlloe: ñikkaon nan nizjit kρwa, ñankodh tégutizjik, kuño.

– Ttṣiñenkρet schi kρwa joe, andjowkρet tthey athen étan kenlloe, yakiño gwoρat. Akρon nidjen zjé kwentledhttset llen kwottlé. Dindjié kρékonllen tthey. Zjé inl'égoezjey athen-tchidhôw dhitschiw. Etschiégé athen-tchi néodhindjek, yaha gu dhatchi.

Akρonlloe: nâhtoedhet tchρô Dindjié ttschié ttset ndjôw zjié tchojié. Nidjen noegutittchin, diyétchidhoeρdha,. ll'ugu kodathakº kkadhendak zjanéshoetρan tchi kkitinttcho. Ey gwoρat schi étan tiyoeρè. Etschiégoe édétiño:

– Voe tchi-tρaldhρa. Kukkan nidjendé nâhtoedhet dhitchi èlloe voetitindjik. Akρon nidhatchié yu dhatchi.

Titschien joe, akρey tsell Etschiégé ρè ninézjié. Etschiégé yaño:

– Djugwahan tchugullu ñihey ñahtoedhet ndjôw gwottset? yaño. Akρon akρeyantschiw:

– Djigundiègu ttset ñihè, yaño.

Nidjen ttset tchojié Etschiégé, adzjich gwoρat. Voe toevi-dhôw-ttsoedé voeykè zjié nantschiw, étchidhankiek. Athen-dji, vizjit ttchédoettaρak dhantsen, ey tthey odhindjek, dji edji ñitié kukkan voeρa ñitié kρwa, akρon ey dindjié intlan-yontchit, ey tchρan voeρa ñitié, kρwa.

Zjugutégu ndjôw néñihètchion kkit nitschié, ñandjow, ll'ugu llen kwozjié dhitllé. Zhikki kuyaño, ll'ugu datssig, dhenday; zjanéshoetρan, akρon ittchié atsaha. Kukkan ndjow tρendjidheyttset nâhtedhet han dhéhen, ey kwozjié kégwiti.

Etschiégé yoe éhan gwottset ñankodh ninézjié yu, voe ttsoedé, tchρan naïnhè llé nedhanhè, dindjié tinttcho dheltsen. Akρon édétan han gwottsenρan, kuttien négutittchin. Ey kwotlen joe wu! wu! teïndjié. Nâhtedhet ρatρidjiw tthè. Etschiégé toeρdha odhîndjek, ṣiété tidjidhantρien, nâhtedhet ρaidjiw yé tchi-tig kkédhanρdha, tègoe-nété djedhilnen, ñikkè-kkρagoe, yel'enédénellρdha lloe, yé tchi l'oetétanen, yoedhelρen, tρèyénidhanχiw.

Akρonlloe: yé kan kwosjié dhijié yu ll'ugu zjanèshoetρan natρoetandak lloe zjan nalρdhey tinétizjik. Ll'ugu inl'adhgwenllé ñittschiédhanhiw, toe ttsoedé niyénilloe yu nétchitik. Zjé kwottset ninézjié,

– Akρonlloe: yuthen dji l'en djokkin, tchahandiedh dhatchi, voekkè tρilhiw, kiyaño. Akρon voetchiakρet schi llen tégutizjik.

Akρonlloe: inl'ag kuttchin dindjié ñenttaykρet kenlloe, détachρan-elρwo ttsé tédihi. Ey dindjié chwon ṭsoeρan; ékaïn zjantittcho, khittsè détchρan-ttsè tρow kenlloe, khittcha tsè-dhôw voekkρag dzé tchρan tchi tthey ñitρétρitllet, ey lloe khizjionhun enlloe. Ey gwooρat chwon isaρan.

Ey dindjiékρet Etschiégoe voetchiakρet tthey khittset kitchodjil khizjan dhaρen kunkρat. Dindjié konllen zjankitchotli, khiρè nitchitsidjil'.

Akρon Etschiégé nontchihey yu, vi kiikρet nétchikoetatchik. ρan ttset Zhoenan konllen Dindjié ttset nitchodjil. Etschiégé nontchihey ttchon chwon khétik.

– Nakan han gwottset ṣoedjol'i, tiño. Athen-izjiedidhow-voel' vizjit nétchiṭsallik. Vikiikρet yénéllu. Akρon tdha-tig kwétṣé-ttchin, dindjié llen joe. Yathen Anakρen llen tchρan nitsodjil. Akρon Etschiégé vàhkuttchin yakiño:

– Etschiégé, nan kwozjin djinño; akρon yézjiugu tè niguteysha lanval'i? yakiño. Akρon édétan:

– Ṣi zjiedi-dhôw-voel' ttiet niṣôl'i, tiño. Voel'zjié niṭsenllia. Akρon:

Tchitan gwottset tchindié-tρèṣoe-voel'-tρolttha. Akρonlloe: Anakρen tρet χun! χun! ttchek. Voe voel' kwindié nelttchet ρàhtiño. Anakρen tchikitchodjil. Voe tchiakρet khikkétchodjil', Anakρen zjandhaρey; kukkan édétan èlloe dindjié dhaρey.

Etschiégé voe tchρa konlli, Nédhoevè-heg-tihi vazji. Yàh Zhoenan aρan. Nédhvè-hèg-tihi dhivi-dhôw tté dhidié. Edjittchi djuw tinttcho, voendé konllen, klla zjit késhoetahρo, ñil'ey tṣoedhaρè akρon, édétan dindjié aρan kρwa, zjiontρet dhidié; kukkan zje ttédidihi kρwa. Voe djuw ñen ttsen ahek, genχi tchρan, akρon voe gendjié zjit tchρan ñenttsen ahek zjit tchρan dindjié dhelρen.

Akρonlloe Anakρen llen él'adoe nikhénidjia, Etschiégé dzjin nidhajié, ρdha killandjek. ñikkaon tρadh évitchi ñil'eyṭsoeρan kwottset tchojié yu, tchidhiliek. Akρon voe tchiakρet dathakº Zhoenan ttsiégoe ttset tchikhitchodjil yu Nèdhvè-hèg-tihi no-ekotitey hè, toedjuw tinttcho ñenttsen ahek.

Etschiégé ttchon Anakρen kuñahiw, toetchρa tρow ntankllet tthey yoe tρow tédhankle, tédhanklé. Akρonttétihi lloe, vah! – Itsch! itsch! tiño. Ekρonttétiño zjin, akρon Nédhvè-hèg-tihi édjittchi akhétillik billi (schian ttiet kρwa kukkan) vàh kuttchin èlloe Anakρen ttschié khénadjet gwoρat tinétizjik. Anakρen tchikédhotchil yu, Nédhvè-hèg-tihi akρontté tiño:

– Djugu gwottset zjionétɒet Anakɒen vàh sié-tétihi. Ʒoe altɒen ʒoeñaôtchia, tiño. Etschiégé yoe altɒen yoeñadhantɒien yu, yoéndjik yu, ɒan Anakɒen llen apan. Anakɒen tchitsodjil. Dindjié kɒet Anakɒen kodathakᴏ tchikoedhaɒa.

Anakɒen inl'agoezjey èlloe voetʂaɒan, nédhikiek kɒwa gwoɒat billi. Etschiégé yaño:

– Ettsendow kkèlloe djien niñodjil chon! Djien nétchôtchil chon! Etschiégé soe toño, ʒoe katɒoôndak; tthey djien niñodjil kɒwa lloe, yaño. Akɒon Anakɒen tinanttchi enlloe tsendja tchitizjien:

– Ettet! yendow dji akɒon djien ʒià kuttchin ɒakiyondjia dji, ʒi siahan tɒella kɒwa! tiño.

Akɒon voel'étchidi, elloe tsoedhaɒè, nésiédjattcho gwoɒat. Akɒon kukkan tiyétlen voe altɒen-klla zjit étoezjé-dhantchɒo, étoedhaɒen yu ninidhet.

Akɒon kukkan Etschiégé èlloe tʂédhaɒé. Schin kwozjin yédhelɒen. Ettet.

(9: 231-244)

Dung

Etsiégé is so called because when he was very small, those who brought him up rubbed him with musk-ox dung, to endow him with magic powers.

He was found at the water's edge by an old woman who brought him up. When he grew up, he became a famous and powerful magician.

Now, at this time, we were living in the midst of a different nation which had reduced us to slavery and was systematically destroying us. They are called the nation of the *Zhoenan* or Prostitutes. These people were very rich; they possessed metals, clothing, glass-ware, and trinkets of all kinds; but they had sworn our destruction.

Etsiégé therefore said to his brothers:

"Let us advance upon them in canoes."

We therefore set out to do battle, for we were so unhappy in their midst that we could not even laugh except into the heart membrane of a reindeer; they mistreated us if they heard us laughing. We therefore laughed into a pitcher or into the heart membrane of a reindeer in order not to be heard, for they imagined we were mocking them.

The *Dindjié* therefore went to war against the *Zhoenan*. We made great mock of them, both because they went about naked and because they cooked the rotting carcass of an evil-tempered little dog and ate it as a feast. They even forced us to eat roast dog with them. We ate it, but *Etsiégé* was never willing to eat this unclean meat.

Etsiégé saw a very handsome *Zhoenan* youth and wanted to kill him. He therefore walked along with him, and struck him from behind with a lump of clay, breaking his spine and killing him.

"After dealing such a blow," said his companions, "you can expect all the *Zhoenan* to seek your life as reprisal. You had best flee far from here."

Etsiégé therefore departed, and his parents with him.

But the old *Zhoenan*, mother of the young man, said to *Etsiégé*:

"Why did you treat my son in that way? "

Dung's only reply was to deal the old woman a heavy blow in the middle of the forehead, which knocked her down. She lay motionless.

Dung was very strong and powerful because of his magic arts, not magic such as our modern magicians boast of, which is weak, but real magic such as is not known in this day and age. Yet, in spite of his magic powers, he was the gentlest of men. He never grew angry with his countrymen, or if he grew angry, he never struck them. He worked his wonders with the help of reindeer antlers or a stick made of red willow, and called all men his brothers.

Having therefore gone to war, *Etsiégé* found the *Zhoenan* without fear, and his brethren dwelling in the midst of their enemies. Arriving in the village where his brother and his sister lived, he found the latter in mourning for her son whom the *Zhoenan* had just killed. She had thus scattered vermilion on her hair and white swansdown, as is the custom for those in mourning.

Dung entered his brothers' house during the night, and devoted himself to devising evil magic against the *Zhoenan*. He had attached pointed bones to the end of his snowshoes, like two horns. In the middle of the village, a young man, bound by *Ettsun*, the spirit of death, was leaping from tent to tent. The creation of an evil spell, he was *Akpey antschiw* (the Young Magician).

Dung therefore broke through the crowd of spectators, wearing his snowshoes armed with the horns described, both in front and behind, and hurled himself after the Young Magician who was whirling round the camp. He leapt upon his back wearing his spear-decked snowshoes; with the young man he rushed upon the *Zhoenan* and slew them all. Then our enemies were fewer in number than the *Dindjié* and separated from us.

But the old woman who had reared Dung, sitting beside the trail, moaned and lamented, saying:

"Ah! If my sons were still alive! "

Dung did not even go into this old *Zhoenan's* tent, even though she had brought him up. He contented himself with glancing compassionately into her tent.

"Who is there? " asked the old grandmother. "Ah! It is you, my son, returning to me! Oh! My son, this night your younger brother has slain all my people, in the guise of the Young Magician."

Dung said only:

"Mother, I am thirsty."

She gave him drink, and he went on his way to join his brothers, the *Dindjié*. He had taken two wives amongst the *Zhoenan*, whom he rejected. The old grandmother had given him a brand new tent, which he abandoned. He left everything to flee with his brothers, and they all left the country of Prostitutes together. As they fled, they saw fine goat skins stretched on trestles near the homes of their enemies. Dung took them, baled them up and continued on his way. All were making for the place where their native land lay. While the *Zhoenan* slept, they seized fine booty. Unfortunately, they delayed rather too long.

As they were on their way:

"What is happening yonder on the sea," they asked one another.

A great wind was rising, whipping up waves as high as fir trees. The waters swelled and rose continually, towering up in every direction like rocky pinnacles.

"Make for land with all speed", cried Dung to his brothers.

The latter hastened to disembark. He stood alone at the water's edge and swept the earth with his oar. At that moment, the pillar which supports the universe fell, the terrestrial disk sank and the rising water flooded and covered the earth, and all that remained of the *Zhoenan* was swallowed up in the sea. Not one escaped.

"Come, hurry, this way, my brothers! " *Etsiégé* cried again.

"Yes! Yes! " they answered.

They all followed him, and he brought them across the sea with dry feet. They all arrived safe and sound on the opposite shore.

When evening came, Dung said to his brothers:

"Our country is still far distant; but be calm, I will bring it nearer."

So saying, he took a one-year-old reindeer fawn, killed it, drew the nerve from its leg, saying to his brothers:

"You will not eat this."

By the magic of the drawn nerve, the land of his ancestors drew near to them. When night came, it was not far away. But at twilight, Dung had returned to his brothers, who had told him:

"Alas! Our children have no meat to eat, and the grown men are without food."

Now, there were countless tents, and innumerable people, but they had nothing to eat. In one tent only there was just the remains of a reindeer's head. Dung ate it and lay down to perform his inquiring magic.

It was a monster, a serpent, which was robbing the *Dindjié* of their meat. This serpent kept all the fish, which were frozen as hard as stone. "I shall destroy it," vowed *Etsiégé*.

But he did not know the serpent's hiding place. However, he lay down, as I have said, to work his questioning magic.

As the *Dindjié* slept, The Child Magician appeared to Dung, who asked him: "Where is the trail which leads to the isle of serpents? " The Child Magician answered:

"It lies that way."

So *Etsiégé* rose in the middle of the night, profiting by the moonlight. He strengthened his arm with the reindeer antler which he used to work his magic, that antler which was so heavy of itself and yet so light for Dung and those to whom he entrusted it. He also took his goatskin blanket, and made his way to the Isle of Serpents (1).

This island stretches far over the ocean. It is long, vast, and its waters abound with exquisite red fish called "*Zhikki*", which are eaten raw, and which have a delicious flavour. But in the middle of the island is the cavernous entrance to the lair of the great Serpent of Death, the guardian of these wonderful fish, turned into stone by him.

Dung, having arrived at this grotto, planted his blanket on a stake at the entrance to the cavern, to draw the serpent out. As for him, he kept careful watch, hidden behind it. Then he heard the monster roaring, and saw it come out of the cavern. At once, he brandished his reindeer antler and dealt the monster a mighty blow which split its head and left it lifeless at his feet. Then he entered the cave which was enormous and full of fish. He filled his blanket with them and returned to camp. When he arrived, he said to his brothers:

"In those far regions, I have just killed the cursed beast. I trod him underfoot and left him lying on the ground."

From that time on, the *Dindjié* did not go short of food.

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(1) It should be noted that any continent, any land mass, is called an island by the *Dindjié*. This must be regarded as a usage particular to them.

Now, there was another very powerful nation whose warriors wore headgear styled from globulous wood like the shoots of our fir trees. Above the waist they wore a garment made of small pebbles stuck with pine resin (2). They were also armed with great shields hung from their left shoulders and stone darts with long slim shafts. It was thus no mean task to vanquish them. They were a populous race who lived in the barren, treeless desert, dwelling in tents roofed with moss. *Etsiégé* set out to fight them with his young warriors. He could no longer fight, for he was very cold. But he had told his men:

"Carry me towards the enemy and place me on my sleigh."

He was placed on his animal skin sleigh and his two sons hauled him to the summit of a mountain, at the foot of which a host of warriors were fighting. Tumult and shouting filled the air. The enemy had arrived in force and were gaining over the *Dindjié*.

At the sight of these multitudes, Dung's countrymen said to him:

"Speak, *Etsiégé*, do you alone speak, and we will judge what is happening below."

Then he replied:

"Set me back on my sleigh."

They obeyed.

"Now, send me hurtling down the mountain towards the enemy."

His two sons pushed the sledge down the slope until it gathered impetus. Then suddenly, a noise like thunder was heard by the Eskimos (3). It was Dung's sledge hurtling down the mountain. It shot forth lightning and the roar of a hundred thunder claps. At this sound, the wooden-helmeted enemies took flight. *Etsiégé's* brothers pursued them and slew great number of them. But Dung killed no one.

Etsiégé had a younger brother called *Nedhvé-hèg-tihi* (he who wears an ermine robe). Clothed in a long white garment with magic powers, he carried, on the end of a cord, an instrument which looked like a fish caught on a hook. This strange object, which had eyes, he kept swinging back and fore, back and fore, incessantly, as priests do with a censer. The first time we saw the priests swinging their little smoking jars, we were reminded of our story: they are surely doing the same thing, we said to ourselves. The action convinced us of this.

Now, *Nedhvé-hèg-tihi* slew our enemies by the side of *Etsiégé*, his elder brother, but not in battle. When war was waged, *Nedhvé-hèg-tihi* killed no one, spilled no

(2) The Chochones or Serpents of America do in fact wear baldrics plated with glued on pebbles. See H.H. Bancroft: 'The wild tribes of the Pacific coasts.'

(3) Eskimos. *Anakpen* or Dung-beetles. This salacious epithet is generally applied by the *Dindjié* to their enemies from the West.

human blood. Prostrate on the ground, by design, he murmured and intoned ceaselessly, swinging the object which I have just described. By his works and this swinging, he delivered us from our enemies. His magic was not, however, like the magic of our modern magicians. Such magic is unknown in our days.

Once, a very great number of these Dung-beetles (*Anakpen*), people of the barren desert, banded together against the *Dindjié* while *Etsiégé* was sleeping. He slept on all day and did not wake until evening (4). Although night was falling, battle was about to begin when he arrived. Now, the *Dindjié* were losing ground and fleeing before the enemy. But the man in the white robe, prostrate and muttering to himself, began to swing the instrument at the end of his cord.

Dung, seeing that the Dung-beetles were winning the day, passed over his brother's body time and again, leaping from one shoulder to another so as to describe a cross. Each time he leapt, he uttered the word "*Itsch*!" and an enemy fell. All evening the brothers did this and nothing more, the one swinging his instrument while intoning mysterious words, the other leaping across his brother's shoulders so as to describe a cross.

However, the *Dindjié*, fighting on the barren plain, suddenly took heart again. They no longer feared the Dung-beetles, and defeated them.

One only did they spare, an old man whose life Dung had decided to spare.

"Go," he said to him, "and in future, keep far away from these regions, you and all your kinsmen. Never return this way."

The old man was very advanced in years.

"So be it," he replied. "If in future years my countrymen return this way, it will not be through my doing."

So he was allowed to depart, and was not killed out of respect for his white hair. He seemed so cast down! But when all his countrymen had fled, the old man, ashamed of their defeat, strangled himself with the string of his bow, and so died.

As for *Etsiégé*, none ever vanquished him. Old age finally claimed him. Thus the story ends.

(Told by *Sylvain Vitoedh*, in 1870, at Fort Good Hope.)

(11: 71-83)

(4) The Red Skins never wake anyone who is sleeping, even if the need is urgent; they wait for him to wake naturally.

90 **Tchia**

Yendjit tiñanttchi, voe ttsindjô tchρan, vi kii in-l'agoezjey tchρan, tρieg kokwenday. Vi kii lloe Tchia buzji. Tiñanttchi tsendja ñontchihey yu, voendè kρwa. Voe ttsiñaρan tthey ñontchihey yu viñen konlli, nizjigo attchô, ttchahandiedh; nédétan néninhek tsékukin.

Akρon tiñanttchi lloe voendè kρwa, kukkan nazjié. Djigundiégu athen ovilhew kwottset tchidhéjié lloe, nidjen dhidié, athen kwantchen, voe al'tρen voekkié tchρan odhendjik yu, voe ttsindjô:

– Yendji athen ahal', yaño dji, kwottset yàh al'tρen odhendjek, tiñanttchi étchidhanttchien akρon konnlen ñen yikkè, yédhaρey.

Akρonlloe inl'ag ttsiñaρan voe dindjié tiño:

– Nidjen ñendjig voet ahin.

– Soe al'tρen, soekkié tchρan sintlaïnllé, bunkρat tρotia, yaño dindjiéju. Ttsindjo al'tρen anttagu ñendjig ttset, édétan kkié étchidhanttchien, ñendjig eñanttsit, yédhelρen.

– Akρonlloe: voeyidjiñinhyiw, yaño ttsindjo.

– Ey! koyendowttset schin soedhaρey! ño tiñanttchi.

Akρontté kukan ñendjig ρanttschit odhoedhanttchi tthek, dattchρi ñendjig.

– Tchootin ñen yendji tenanjek? yaño. Ttsinaρan kwottset tchojié, tρenven tchitchiennaïtoezjek, ñendjik. Voe dindjié ttschien ttset nétoeñanhi, ñen tschien ñittiedh, ρatoeyénanttiedh, schi nétchidhinllik, voe ttsoedé zjié néyoetéñanhi.

Kwotlen joe schi attcho. Akρon schi tchiñe tittcho gwoρat, tiñanttchi:

– Kiedji! nilli dhittcho tthek odhoedhilttchi, yaño, nilli-ttcho voetρeyzjij al'tsen tthey, ttsindjo vaño.

– Ah! tsugu elttcho adjoech, yaño ttsiñaρan. Ey tlen tchitchodjié, schi ttchahandiedh voe dindjiéjyu éñadhantchit; édoetan akρon ñendjig voet ttcho, dhenday aha. Ey tlen nivia ttschiéttset tchojié yu, étρilltchi.

Ey gwoρat tiñanttchi nétédinizjié. Chwon yenday. Ey gwoρat tρitchojié yu, kkiné ñandju. Chwon kukkan natρoetandak vizjit shan tchojié, van tchρô ttset niñedjiw. Tetsellvoet van kkρagoe etsé tthek.

– Dji ttsellvoettchidiρadé atsé lanval'i? Athen kuñahi billi, ey gwoρat nadjet, yénijit tiñanttchi. Yé ttset ñendjidhojié.

– Kuédji! ndéétan niñisizjit, éïakρon soe ttsindjo ttchahandiedh han soe khetρatchit. Soe ttschié ttset kwohedh si kii vàh, yaño.

Akρonlloe ttsellvoet yésiédidhen yu, yéttset nivia:

– Siet tétihin, yaño ñen. Ttiñanttchi ttsellvet tchρô kket tédhijié yu, yèt tchinidhéjié, nizjit yet tchion zjègoe tchojié. Ettsendow tρahan-tchidhéjié yu ttsellvoet tiñanttchi vaño:

– Dji siozjiek kwentsell kkañantρié kudjin? yaño.

– Akρwa! yaño tiñanttchi. Akρon ñen tchρantchρat yèt tchinidhéhèdh, tchρantchρat yèt tρa-hantchidhéjié yu:

– Akρon djugu, nan ttsendja gutéttchin, voe kkañantρié kudjin? tiño tt'sellvoet.

– Elloetthey; kukkan kwentsell kunillhi, tiño tiñanttchi.

Kkèlloe tchinédhéhedh yu, ettsendow ndéétan tsendja kunahi, tchia ttsettinétizjik.

Akρonlloe: tiñanttchi tchia tselloe tétizjik, ndéétan kkétinttcho tétihi yu, voe tsindjo konté ninézjié. Dzjan ttset tchojié, voe kkρagoe nilli tédhitllé kkañatρié yu, kunidhen. Natρétandak, yu ñandjiw, voe ttsindjow ttsen kédhétik, voe tρètlla-eshtlli yé ttset voel'éyanhè.

– Schi soe ñaintchit, yaño.

– Zjé voet kρwa! tiño ttsindjô.

– Tρion soeñaïnkρey, tikii vaño tthey. Tchiondjidhil'i – Si lloe tchion vunkρat tρeyschia, ño ttsindjo. Tchidhijié, niténizjiéyu, tchion ρèlloe, towhig-tihi tédiñanen, voe dindjié eñankρey: Voendè kρwa! yénijit gwoρat tétiyin. Akρon kukkan édétan:

– Soe-étchinlρdha yénindhen tatρèdja! Akρon nan dhintchi kukkan! ttchon! yaño. ρanttset ttsindjo oëndjik, yétchin niltchi, yétchi kkeytenelnen, ninidhet, Ettet.

(9: 245-249)

The Young Man

There once lived an old man, his wife and their only son, a fine-looking boy called *Tchia*. The old man, having reached a great age, had lost his sight. His wife, also very old, had acquired a shrewish, bad-tempered and spiteful disposition. She was always deceiving the poor old man.

Although blind, the old man still hunted. He would go and lie in wait along the reindeer runs, armed with his bow and arrow and accompanied by his wife. When the

latter signalled the presence of an animal within range of his arrows, the old man would shoot, usually dropping his prey.

One day, the old woman said to her husband:

"I see a moose feeding over there."

"Hand me my bow and arrows and I will kill it," replied the blind old man.

She aimed the bow towards the animal. The old man bent his bow, let fly an arrow, and killed the moose.

"There now, you missed it! " said the spiteful old woman, in obvious ill humour.

"Ah! I am getting too old," signed the old man. Yet he could hear the moose bellowing and groaning as it breathed its last.

"What is that animal groaning over there? " he asked.

The old woman pretended to go and find out. She reached the water's edge, where the moose had fallen. She hid from the blind man, eviscerated and jointed the animal; she carried back the meat and hid it carefully under her own blanket, covering it completely.

However, the old woman could not pretend for long, for she was impatient to eat fresh meat. So she roasted a joint of moose; but as the meat roasted and sizzled, the blind man said to his wife:

"It is strange, but I hear meat sizzling. What is making such a sound? It is like a rump cut of moose roasting."

Then he added:

"Why, I can even smell the aroma of roast meat. What are you roasting? "

"Oh, it is just a marten which I snared," replied the old woman. "I am roasting it for you."

And indeed, she served sour marten flesh to the blind old man, while she regaled herself with a juicy steak from the moose which the old man had killed. When she had finished her meal, the old woman left the tent and went off.

The blind man could take no more. Life had become a burden to him. So he started out, feeling his way. It was difficult, but by feeling his way, he was able to go out alone and find his way to the great lake. A white-headed loon was calling and hooting there. The old man went in this direction, shuffling along, to try to kill it. He groped his way to the edge of the lake.

"Alas! I have lost my sight," he began, in a pitiful voice, "and now my wicked wife and young son have left me, and I do not know where they have gone."

Then the white loon took pity on him, and swam towards the blind man.

"Come with me," he said to him.

The old man rode on the back of the huge arctic bird and dived with him. Both travelled far under water. When they rose to the surface again, the white loon said to the blind man:

"The dry land which is within sight, can you make it out at all? "

"No, alas," replied the blind man.

So the white bird carried the old man out to sea again. Once more he dived with him and once more brought him back up to the surface.

"Well, now! The land can be seen very clearly from here. Can you see it? " asked the loon.

"Not very well," replied the blind man, "but I can make it out a little."

Once more the white loon went down beneath the sea with the blind man, and performed his task so well that the blind old man became a young man (*Tchia*) once more, blessed with perfect sight.

But the old man, once more young, strong and keen-sighted, continued pretending that he was still blind. He went in search of his wife, tracking her steps; he came to the trestle on which she had placed meat from the moose which he had killed; then, completely certain of the falseness and selfishness of that shrewish woman, he continued to pretend.

So, walking as if still blind and holding out his game-bag to his wife, he asked her to give him a morsel of fresh meat.

"There is no meat in the house," was her hard reply.

Her husband then asked her for a drink:

"Fetch me water," he said to his son, "I am very thirsty."

His wife replied.

"I will go myself."

She went out and returned with brackish foul-smelling water infested with worms and larvae. This she gave him to drink, thinking that it would poison him. She acted thus because she believed him to be blind. But he said:

"You must certainly be seeking my death, to behave in such a way. Then die yourself! "

So saying, he seized his wife, flung her from the tent, and split her skull, so that she died. So ends the story.

(Told by *Sylvain Vitoedh*, in 1870, at Fort Good Hope.)

(11: 84-88)

10º nitchρa-kρet

Ttρotchédi-ten ñiρakwétittchin ñitchρakρet. Tρétchédheyhedh, ño, akρon:

– Si tchρa, nunan kkρagoe kkitinttcho kρwa.

– Ey siyondé nésiégidjattcho tatρèdja! Tchidi zjit nunan kwottset kkinatρédékρay, lanval'i?

Ey gwottsen ñitchρa kétchédhékρen yu, ρanttset dindjié-llen ttsi zjit nikitchodjil, ño. Khiρè tsitchodjil yu:

– Akρon, nuρun nuρwet tôttcho! zjankiyaño.

Aha! kukkan! kuño ñitchρa kρet. Tanétchinitsidjiw, atsaha, ttsi zjit nétsodjil tρè-kloedé tsotchil.

Akρon cheg gwottset nétsidhekρè billi. Nizjit gwelhen, akρon non ttset dindjiékρet zjantithow ρénitsodjil. Dindjié zjandéthow vàh ñittétchitsatchiuk; anzjoe gwottsen tthey nettsizjittsotchil. Cheg négutsittchin kρwa, gwoρat.

Inl'eg nan kkρâgoe kwottset tsotchil yu, ezjion kuttchin ρè nitsotchil. Enéuji! dindjiékρet kwajen. Kutρet tsoegwettchin kρwa. Ttcho kkitinttcho, élloe kwinizjin kρwa gwoρat.

Tègé gottsen, tien ttset ρeteytsotchil yu, dindjié dakay kkatsénatρié. Teyttset natsanday tchρan. Dindjié zjankay édjittchillen teyñakenlloe, ño, tatρèdja. Kukkanjoe cheg gwèhen kkelloe, tchρan nillen inl'eg sié ttsen ñilen, nidjen tthey tey ρè nikitchodjil. Tρénitsodjil yu, teyzjit cheg tsékwittchin kwentsell. Akρon dindjié zjanditssig kenlloe tatρèdja, ey kρet.

Néttsizjittsotchil yu, akρon:

– Nuρwet tîttcho èlloe kρwa! zjankiño ñitchρakρet Djien kwitattchin akρon, ñuρun, kiño.

– Nuρun loe! kiyaño.

Akρon ñitchρakρet ñiρakwitettchin tatρédja nidjen, Dindjiékρet ρàh tsékujin. Cheg ñitchρa Dindjiétρet tittcho, anzjoe gottsen inl'ag tiñanttchi, ttsiñaρan tthey inl'agzjey kwentlèdh ñontchihey, vitchiρè dakay, nitchρakρet tédjékitchohèdh.

– Akρon nuρun, tchootiyin kuttchin ôl'i, billi? yakiño.

– Akρon nuρun lloe, ñil'oeondékρet idilli, ñupun. Ttρotchédi nitschié kρwa dhidilli, akρon nunan ttschién ttset ttsi zjit yéhènidhihèdh. Azjoegwottsen kodathakº nan kkaon kkénaïtρié ttchon, kuño ñil'eondé kρet.

– Nuρun kudjin ñitchρakρet yéhè kitchohèdh yéñonten? ño.

– Aha! tatρédja! kiyaño.

Ettet. Voetpié, voe hèn tchρan kégwelhen ttchon, kiρwàh kékwéttchin.

Yéhédhkρet billi nuρwétazjiékρet kenlloe, ño, tatρédjà. Akρon eygwottsen Dindjié édilli, nuρun. Ey villen.

(9: 250-253)

The Two Brothers

In the very beginning, two brothers lived together in the country to the west. One day, they said to one another:

"Let us go in search of young duck, on the far side of the Great Lake."

They climbed into their canoe, set off in this direction, and lost their bearings at sea.

"Little brother," said the elder, "the land I see does not, alas, resemble our own. Those fir trees are not like our fir trees."

"Alas, elder brother, we are indeed in a pitiful situation. How can we find our way back to our own land? "

The two brothers went on and soon saw a great crowd of people approaching them in canoes, we are told. These strangers came up to the two lost ones.

"Do you want to come with us? " they asked.

"Yes, we will," replied the two brothers.

They reached land with the strangers, took meat with them, then embarked once more and headed for the open sea.

They sailed for a long time, there can be no doubt; long were they at sea. At last, they arrived in the country of yellow-skinned men, with whom they traded, but with whom they did not stay long.

Going onward, they sailed south and came to another island, and a race of people with skins as black as coal. But they did not stay there long, for these people were not friendly.

Then sailing west (*Tahan*), the strangers reached the country of the white men. They visited the latter and traded with them. The white men made the sailors many gifts. But here also, the visit was not prolonged. At sea once more, they steered their boats towards a river which comes from the sun. Humans lived here too, and the sailors landed on this shore. This visit was a longer one. These men were redskins.

As the sailors were about to set off once more, the two brothers said to them:

"We shall go no further with you, for it pleases us to stay here."

"Do as you think best," replied the sailors

So the two brothers established themselves in that country, at the mouth of the great waterway which flows from the sun (that is, from the east) and lived there with the people of the land.

For a long time they lived there happily, when, one day, they met an old man and an old woman, both very advanced in years, their hair white with age.

"Tell us, young men," said the old people, "what manner of men are you? "

"We two are two brothers, who lost our way at sea, far from our own land," they replied. "We lost our way while at sea in our canoes, and since that time, have travelled all round the world."

Are you not the two brothers who were said to be lost as far back as the beginning of the world, after the earth was made."

"That is so," they replied, "we are those two brothers."

This was proof enough. Their father and mother recognized them and stayed with them.

We are told that it was those two brothers who were, without doubt, our ancestors. It is said that we are descended from them. So, of course, our people are men (*Dindjié*). So ends the story.

(Told by the *Dindjié Touldhoulé-azé*, slave of the Yellow-Knives, in June 1863, at Great Slave Lake.)

(11: 88-91)

Ballad of the *Atoena* of Fort *Nnu-Lla–Ttôp* (Alaska)

The wind blows on the Yukon River and my husband hunts reindeer on the *Koyoukon* Mountains.

Xami, Xami, sleep, my little one.

There is no wood to light the fire. My flint axe is broken and my husband has taken the other with him. Where is the warmth of the sun? Ah! it is hidden in the lodge of the Great Beaver, waiting for springtime.

Xami, Xami, sleep, my little one; do not waken.

Do not look for fish, old woman; their haunts have long been deserted, and the raven no longer comes to perch on the fish bench. My husband has been gone for a long time. What can he be doing up in the mountains?

Xami, Xami, sleep peacefully, my little one.

Where is my loved one? Does he lie, famished, on the mountain slopes? Why does he delay so long? If he does not come soon, I shall go myself; I shall go to find him in the mountains.

Xami, Xami, sleep softly, my child.

The raven has come, crowing and cackling. Its beak is red with blood and its eyes shine with hatred, the hypocrite!

Thank you for the succulent morsel provided for me by *Kouskokpala*, the Magician! On the mountain, woman, on the steep mountain, your husband lies peacefully.

Xami, Xami, Oh! sleep, my child, and do not waken.

Twenty reindeer tongues are twisted into a knot on his shoulder; but he has no longer a tongue in his head to call upon his wife! Wolves, ravens and foxes quarrel over his remains and fight for each mouthful. His nerves are tough and hard. Ah! It is not like that, mother of the child sleeping on your breast.

Xami, Xami, sleep, my child; do not waken.

But on the mountain, *Kouskokpala* the Hunter makes his way slowly onwards. On his strong shoulders are slung two oxen, and bound between them are pots of melted lard. Twenty reindeer tongues hang from his belt. Go, old woman, gather wood; for the raven, that liar, traitor and deceiver, is flying far away.

Xami, Xami, wake, little sleeper; wake and call your father!

He is bringing you reindeer meat, melted marrow juice, fresh, plump venison, from the mountain.

Tired and beset with difficulties as he was, he carved a toy for you, child, from reindeer antlers as, weary and impatient, he awaited caribou on the mountain slope.

Awake, and see how the raven itself is now hiding from his arrows! Awake, little one, awake, for your father is here!

(Translated from the English of W.H. Dall, esq., by Emile Petitot, in 1876.)

(11: 92-94)

16.1.2 Spirits and deities

Dindjie heroes and divinities

Anakpen (the Stercorials).
Atsina (the Stranger).
Akpey añtschiw (the magic youth).
Dindjié (the man).
Ehna ta-ettini (he who has eyes in the back as in the front).
Dindjié näh-taedhet (the snake-men).
Ehta oduhini or Ennahi (he who sees behind and in front).
Etpoetchokpen (the navigator through obstructions).
Etschiégé (the dung of the musk ox).
Ettsun (the otter).
Klag datha (the yellow mouse).
Kian (the serpent).
Kpwon-étan (the fireless man).
Kpwon-tpet naχatsétaetpal' (the funeral procession through the camp).
Ttsell-voet (the white loon).
L'atpa-tsandia (she who is ravished first by one then by the other).
L'en-akpey (the Dog-feet).
Nakkan-tsell (the Pygmy).
Nédhvé-hèg tihi (he who is clad in an ermine cloak).
Nitchpa kpet (the two brothers).
Nopodhittchi (the raging one).
Ratpan (the traveller).
Rdha-ttsèg (the evening-woman).
Siè-zjié dhidié (the man in the Moon).
Tchia (the young man).
Tchia-tsell (the boy magician).
Yékkpay-ttsèg (the morning woman).
Zhoenan (the harlots).
(11: 101-102)

"*Atsina* (the Stranger), the *Dindjié's* foremost hero, who dons the skin of the great white eagle "*ové*", after seeing two lands or islands rise out of the waters as he was crossing the sea."
(29:696)

"... the evil spirit is *Dindjyêta-in*."
(59:503)

"... the name of the evil spirit is *dji-dzjin* ... or the strong spirit: *djen-tloedh*. Alternative names for the same spirit are: *handjétoetlaedh*, *hantpoetè toet laedh*, the rejected strong one, repulsed far away."
(15:82-83)

"Another *Dindjié* name for the devil is *Dindjiè-zjéin*, the black man... *Tiñantchi tchidi-djeltpien* i.e. "the black little old man cast into the fire."
(15:98-99)

"... celebrated man, a benefactor of the nation, who, after a lifetime of good deeds on earth, ascended to heaven, body and soul. That man... the Loucheux call him... *Etsiégé*... His existence is linked to that of the celestial bodies."
(13:XXXI)

"Greenland traditions mention a goddess inhabiting the sky... She is also found in Loucheux lore."
(13:XXXII)

"The second person of their divine triad is of the feminine sex... they call her *yakkpay-ttsièg* (boreal-light woman) and they place her at the north-east. That word *yakkpay*... is the name for polar light, the aurora borealis, and means... celestial whiteness (from *ya*, sky and *dekka*, white)."
(14:XXXII)

"I shall have little to say about the divine mother of the arctic *Dènè-dindjié*, the invisible Woman. This second feminine person of the divine triad is found in many Loucheux legends. She is a perfectly beautiful woman, white, sumptuously dressed but invisible to mortals, save to the elect few she loves. Even so she reveals herself to them only furtively and with her back turned. This celestial woman, who produces the day and light when she comes out, lives far away, on an island of the western sea that few mortals have been able to locate. She readily assumes the form of birds... or changes into a swan or a snow partridge."
(15:71-72)

"According to my narrator... when the *Dindjié* learned, close to one hundred years ago, that a Company of merchants had just come into their country, they did not know what was meant by "company" and imagined it to be a

woman; accordingly, they long believed she was the woman of darkness, coming back to visit them for their unhappiness."
(14:XXXVIII)

"The *Dindjié*. . . worship a moon deity called *Sié-zjié-dhidié*, beneficent genie who long ago came down from heaven to provide them with light, to teach them, to release them from the yoke of their enemies and who, having gone back into the sky and living in the moon, became the god of hunting and of bountifulness, and a shield against their enemies. And yet they also see in this masculine divinity the genie of death and of war."
(11:15)

". . . the *Dindjié* also worship *Titpié* (father of men)."
(11:15)

"They acknowledge as wife of the first man, the day or morning woman, daughter of the Moon-god, whose sons, born before man, were partridges later metamorphosed into *Dindjié*."
(2:154)

". . . those Indians stated to me the name of the supreme God. . . *Yéindji-dhidié*, . . . meaning He who is sitting at the zenith, the Most High."
(15:52)

". . . the *Dindjié* would often invoke fire, even in my presence, and claimed that it could hear them, that it spoke to them. Fire speaks when it crackles. It contradicts people who discourse in its presence and gives them the lie, as when a blazing log of fir suddenly makes a sharp whistling sound. . . Fire puts its fingers into its mouth to relieve their numbness, whenever its ardor abates because of extreme cold, *kpon fwa noédédézi*. It gathers up cold into its bosom so as to make it warm, *kokkpawé kfwiré déyiha*, when the flame pales and the glowing embers take on the look of white hot iron."
(15:76-77)

16.1.3 Sacred objects

". . . they would make. . . small windmills out of pieces of bark, and set them up in the wind to make them spin. . . This was their formula to conjure the wind and cause it to abate."
(4:295)

16.2 Religious practices

16.2.1 Taboos

". . . they claim that they are forbidden to eat sinew from the leg of animals, because one of their heroes cut that nerve on the leg of the genie of evil. . . But few Indians respect that prohibition, any more than they do similar regulations regarding blood and fat. Only tabooed food and animals recognized as unclean are rejected altogether."
(14:XXXX-XXXXI)

". . . they have manitous which they call *ata*, edible meat, and *ata toettchandhen*, forbidden meat. . ."
(15:5)

16.2.2 Magic

"Among the *Dindjié*, the science of conjuration is called magic *schian*. . ."
(15:27)

". . . at Middle Lake camp, there were three Seers: *Chapo*, *Dindjiéttaw*, the Smudgy man, *Nité*, the Moving bog and the woman, *Kundataktsi*.

Chapo's prayer was *Tpiéhén, tpinttcha, ñidjen kwizjin dzjienté schanño*! "Father, as I sleep, grant me all things here that are good." Chapo admitted the good things come while we sleep, but his idea of good things. . . was meat, fish, warm furs, and a chubby wench.

Another prayer was this: *Walé, walé iya*! (bis). *Dzjien kwizjin ll'édji nétputa*! "Let all things that are good come to me here, while I sleep! "

"Here, for instance, is one of the songs of. . . Seer Chapo: *Djiva yatpi kkirétpètinttcho* (bis). *Voe kéninxi kkèpa tschiété! Tschiété tpétanttchô kkirétpètinttcho. Kwè vann zjié kkaon tpèinha!* (Translation) "This one is like a priest. Let everyone pray with him! May you receive (his word) into your bosom, so as to go to heaven with him and as he will."
(5:187)

"*Ñité* aspired to the role of Christ. He antedated Abraham. He was Adam or, at least, Noah. He would sing: *S'enda ll'édh-naen atsiya! Yatéghoe nuputié taéha!* "My eyes witnessed the creation of this earth of mud! My eyes have rested upon our Father of the skies! "
(5:188)

"The woman *Kundataktsi*. . . . had invented a chant that she called angelic: *Tpiébén, schiépé ninisizjié nidè, marci oyi! Tpiéhén schiet kéninxi ll'édjii, ttséhyin tpéill'a zji*. "O Celestial Father, if you would come close to me, I should be grateful to you for it. O Father, if you condescended to talk with me, I should be most happy."
(5:189)

"Don't you know that *Zjen* (Muskrat) is a seer, *Schoekoutahyiw* told me. Two or three years ago already, he received, says he, revelations. He says he is a priest; he prays and sings for us, each spring."
(4:302)

". . . last pring (1877). . . among the Loucheux of Peel River, an Indian who had offered his services to me as interpreter among his fellow-tribesmen said to them: "I pray for you every spring; what need have you of a priest? Am I not sufficient to you? "
(230:7)

16.2.3 Festivals

"Here is the description of a certain Loucheux festival. At night fall on the day of the new moon in the month called the rut or heat of the reindeer (March – April), the natives in each tent cut up some meat in tiny pieces and put it to braise in the ground; it is then bundled into game-bags that each man hangs up on his back.

These preliminaries over, the *Dindjié* furtively come out of their huts hurriedly and stealthily hop and skip from tent to tent with a bewildered look, all the while knocking together two or four red-dyed arrows. This is what they call *pandjakkék aw ttsitchitandia*. While so engaged, they chant: *Klag-datha, nan kkét'ow nikkié anashoekpay! aéxuha!* which means: "Yellow mouse, run quickly over the ground in the form of a cross! *aéxuha!* This festival is celebrated only during the vernal equinox. They say this queer custom has been handed down to them by their ancestors, and that they are thus abiding by the recommendations of the good and mighty Man who had been their protector on earth and who now lives in the moon; finally they claim that the purpose of this ceremony is to obtain his blessings, a great abundance of reindeer and the death of their enemies.

The moon ceremony is called *Kpon-t'a naxa tsètaetat*, i.e. nocturnal and funeral procession around the tents."
(14:XLI-XLII)

16.2.4 Devotion toward the dead

". . . there is a pious custom which consists in mourning for the dead, at sunrise and at sunset by crushing glass beads or trinkets between two stones. The sacrifice of those articles is considered as a respectful offering to the names or spirits of the dead and also as a symbol of mourning. The fragments of those wampungs (necklaces) are thrown into the grave. But this honour is extended only to men of prominence, and never to women or children."
(58:590)

"The *Dindjié* observe a memorial day for their dead. The person or persons who sponsor the ceremony collect a quantity of objects to be distributed among the guests. Then, in the middle of a final dance in which everyone takes part, the host dispenses his presents by throwing them at the head of the one he thus wishes to honour. If the guest finds the gift unsuitable, he is allowed to toss it back at the head of the donor, who thereupon relays it to a third person in the same way that he had given it away and retrieved it."
(14:XXXIII)

17. WORLD OUTLOOK

17.1 Self-image

"In the extreme western area of Alaska, their country, that people bear the name of *Doena* or *Atoena* (men). Along the upper Yukon and the lower Mackenzie, it takes the name of *Dindjié*, which has the same meaning."
(11:13-14)

17.2 Nature

17.2.1 Wind

"The *dindjié* name for wind is. . . *attcey*."
(15:75)

17.3 Measures

17.3.1 Time

"Their measure of time does not exceed the lapse of one year. They recognize a great number of seasons which they characterize by the different conditions of snow or soil, and they divide the year into twelve months or moons, each with its distinctive name. Their year starts in March with the vernal equinox.

Month (is expressed by the word Sun, or rather by the word Moon, as the word for both those celestial bodies is the same.)	*Sié-Sié-nan*: (moon duration) possessive: *voenan*.

1st March	*Chiê-zétché sié*: (eagle moon).
2nd April	*Voenan l'èn vitchi:* (month when the dog barks).
3rd May	*Voenan ll'u-tidjié*: (month of the break up). *voenan atopowo*: (month of the egglaying).
4th June	*Voenan yédétchpadh*: (month of the moulting).
5th July	*Voenan nan éné* (month of the continuous day). *itchité ey*:
6th August	*Voenan ti-itchill*: (month of the rut).
7th September	*Voenan nill'utiya*: (month of the hunt).
8th October	*Nikuticha sié*: (moon of the heat or Indian summer).
9th November	*Toevi sié*: (month of the mountain goats).
10th December	*Voenan sié nakudhoet*: (month in which the sun is dead).
11th January	*Voenan l'én tchitchpô*: (month when the dog is cold). *voedét'o kudji-dhek.*
12th February	*T'adȟa sié*: (ice moon)

(14:XXII, 246)

INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

18. INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

18.1 Loucheux Indians and Eskimos

18.1.1 Social

"*Alponse Sida-jen* (Loucheux guide) said to me: "Twelve or thirteen years ago, this place (a stream called *Chié-intsik nillen*) was the scene of a bloody drama. Some Eskimos came upon us there, unexpectedly, during the night, and murdered five of my compatriots.

Did they put to death all the *Dindjié* in that camp?

Oh! no. Only five men who did not awake in time. . . . At that time. . . we were still stupid. Occasionally, we would hunt and live with those Eskimo bald heads; we had thought we could civilize them.

So, you consider Eskimos as very ferocious?

Ah! chief, they are real wolves and we will never be able to tame them. They are too wild ever to live like men!

Have there ever been any marriages between you people and the Eskimos?

Never any marriage proper. As for sexual relations, there have been some several times. . . Among the *Dindjié*, there is not a single Eskimo half-breed, and among the sambos born of the union of *Dindjié* women with *Dènè* men, I know of only one child who is said to have an Eskimo father. . ."
(4:30-31)

18.1.2 Economic

"The *Dindjié* of the Mackenzie and Anderson Rivers meet twice a year at the mouth of the Mackenzie, to trade with the Eskimos."
(4:123)

18.2 Loucheux Indians and Dènè Indians

"The *Dènè*, their cousins, call the Loucheux, *Dékkéwi, Dékkédhé*, meaning Cross-eyes. The French Canadian name for them is Les Loucheux."
(11:13-14)

18.2.1 Loucheux Indians and Hareskin Indians

18.2.1.1 Cultural

"The Loucheux or *Dindjié* apply to the Hareskins the abusive epithet *Hatchen*, meaning enemies. The Hareskins, who have no craving for deadly warfare, keep pretending that they are being called *Itchun*, i.e. Rosebuds. Thanks to this subtle pretense, Loucheux and Hareskins are the best of friends in the world."
(Gravier 1889:10)

18.2.1.2 Linguistic

"All the *Dindjié*. . . living in the steppes along the coast of the Arctic Ocean speak and understand the Hareskin dialect."
(5:178)

18.3 Loucheux Indians and Kolloches (Tlingit)

18.3.1 Cultural

". . . the *Kolloches* tribes are known to the Loucheux under the name *Tchackrae*."
(170-174)

18.4 Loucheux Indians and White People

18.4.1 Social

"The *Dindjié* never steeped their hands in the blood of Europeans."
(11:14)

". . . they live far from the trading posts. . . have very few contacts with the Whites, except those of the Anderson. . ."
(15:183)

". . . our Catholic Loucheux were expelled from Fort MacPherson last fall (1869) and were refused all help during the winter. They cannot even obtain, in exchange for their furs, the clothing and other items of trade to which Indians are entitled."
(166:160)

18.4.2 Economic

". . . the Americans would barter with them, trading the Indians' furs for clothes, fabrics, tobacco. . . colonial produce: sugar, coffee, cocoa,

pepper, chocolate, tea, flour, rice, hardtack, smoked or sweet ham, salt or smoked pork, preserves. . ."
(15:303)

". . . the Americans would give them 4 "pelus" (10 francs) for a marten pelt for which until then (1870) the Hudson's Bay Company had been allowing half a "pelu" (1 franc .25)."
(15:303)

18.4.3 **Religion**

". . . Protestant minister MacDonald tried to prevent the Loucheux from playing football on a Sunday, alleging they were thus breaking the Sabbath. The Indians being slow to obey, the minister went out in a huff and slapped the face of one of the players. And when the Indians went on with their game, the infuriated minister came out again and announced that unless they stopped their game at once, he would make use of his pistols. . . At this, one of the exasperated Indians seized the minister by the beard and thrust him down to the ground."
(166:159)

". . . those *Dindjié* at Fort Lapierre's House admitted, as did those of Peel River, that they consider Catholic priests far superior to Protestant clergymen; that they pray with Protestant clergymen only because they have been made to, and also because there have been no Catholic priests living among them."
(15:274)

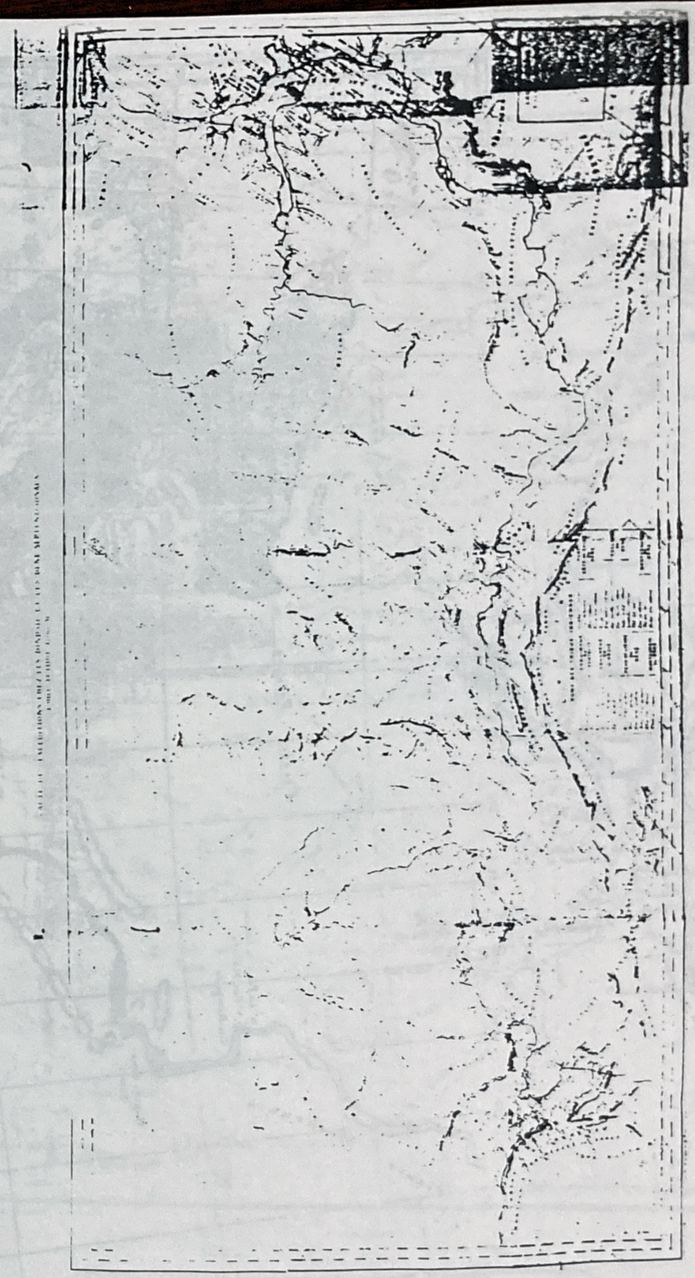
CONCLUSION

This attempt at cultural reconstitution calls for a few remarks and conclusions on the plan that was followed and the results obtained.

Among the great variety of data supplied by the missionary, we have tried to unveil and bring out a dynamic picture of two cultural groups: the *Tchiglit* Eskimos and the Loucheux Indians. The picture is by no means complete, the author having deliberately stressed certain aspects (for instance, material culture).

On the other hand, the minute and systematic observations supply us with a wealth of specific material, enriched with illustrations and maps.

Our aim has been, first to locate the writings of Émile Petitot (diary, personal letters, etc.), then to extract the ethnographic fact out of them, and to classify this material so as to present, as adequately as possible, a dynamic reconstitution of the culture in question.



Rivière Mackenzie
Rapide des Sauteurs
Rapide des Cascades
Rapide des Rochers
Rapide des Cheminées
Rapide des Cèdres
Rapide des Pins
Rapide des Roches
Rapide des Cascades

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA
NORTH-WEST TERRITORY
DISTRICT OF ATHABASCA
YELLOW KNIVES
BEAVERS AND CHIPS

CARTE DES EXPLORATIONS
GRAND LAC DES OURS
Ile de la Société de Géographie
Lac Sitidji-Vann
Esquimaux
Baie Franklin
Cap Lyon
Cap Barrow
TERRE
GRAND LAC DES OURS
BAIE SMITH
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